

BUFFALO BILL'S

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New York Saturday Journal

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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A ROSE FROM HER HAIR.

BY ERN E. REXFORD.

Here is a blossom from her hair;
She gave it to me, years ago.
I see her standing on the stair,
To hear the music's ebb and flow.
Just as she stood that summer night,
Sweet with the fragrances of June,
A radiant vision, all in white,
Touched with the glamour of the moon.

I see the distant dancers glide
To sweet waltz-music down the room,
As if some dream's enchanted tide
Went seaward, drowsy with perfume
Of rose, and heliotrope, and musk;
I wonder if it was a dream,
Born of the music and the dusk—
Of summer and the moonlight's gleam.

But, dream or not, it was so sweet!
I shut my eyes and see it all,
And hear the tread of happy feet,
And voices echoing down the hall
And she stands smiling down at me,
This blossom in her yellow hair,
From the long years of memory
How dear old dreams and faces are!

I whisper low some quaint conceit,
Found in the lover's happy lore,
And feel my wayward pulses beat
To swifter measure than before,
Because her eyes are meeting mine—
Those radiant eyes—so deep, so blue!
While on her cheeks the rose-tints shine,
Oh, fairest face I ever knew!

I feel, as she leans down the stair,
The south wind fragrance of her breath;
She smiles, and gives me, from her hair,
This blossom, drooping to its death.
I take it as a sacred thing
To keep and cherish through the years.
'Tis strange that dead flowers will not spring
To life again, if wet with tears!

The lights go out. The music dies.
The face has vanished from the stair;
I only have my memories,
And this dead blossom from her hair.
But ah! I never can forget
That night, and her who gave to me
This flower which holds a fragrance yet—
A fadeless flower in memory.

Idaho Tom,

THE YOUNG OUTLAW OF SILVERLAND;
OR,
The Hunters of the Wild West.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "BOWIE-KNIFE
BEN," "RED ROB," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER X.

A BOLICATING TIME AMONG THE BOYS.

The scene was as ludicrous as it was provoking to the three friends, Dick, Frank and Perry—the scene presented by Billy Brady and Bold Heart, as they sat facing each other astride of a log, lost in the excitement of a game of cards.

Both of these precocious youths bore evidence of their struggle in the darkness; yet, singular as it may appear, neither of them had received any serious injuries. And how they had brought about an understanding that resulted in the amicable adjustment of their collision, was a question entirely beyond the comprehension of their friends.

That they were safe, however, was certain, and that they regarded their own safety and that of their three companions as a secondary object to the game they were playing, was also plainly evident.

The scene was so comical, and so at variance with common prudence, considering the surrounding dangers, that the three boys concluded to watch proceedings awhile before making their presence known.

Bold Heart was a youth of some eighteen years, and of pure aboriginal blood. His dress, his face and movements, all were those of an Indian, though his features were devoid of that sullen, stoical fierceness so repulsive in a red-skin.

With an Indian's penchant for bright colors, he was rendered a conspicuous object among the green shrubbery by a flaming red sash passed over his shoulder and once or twice around his body. His arms were encircled with bands of silver, and a handsome head-dress with faded, worn plumage, attested his Indian love for barbaric finery. The only evidence of civilization discernible about him was the interest he took in the game he was playing, and the ease with which he manipulated the cards.

But for "tricks that were vain," the young Indian could not hold a candle to his opponents, the redoubtable child of Erin. While Bold Heart kept his sharp, black eyes upon his cards continually, Billy kept as close a watch for an opportunity to exchange a low card for a higher one concealed at the back of his neck—said change being made under the pretense of scratching his frowzy head, and with an adroitness that would have done credit to the inimitable Ah Sin himself.

"That Billy Brady friend of yours, boys, I observe, is inclined to take advantage of my friend Bold Heart—in other words, is a bit of a cheat," whispered Wild Dick, his face aglow with a smile.

"He's a caution, you may bet your life,"



He swung to and fro in mid air over the black abyss, in the jaws of death.

replied Frank. "Billy has seen a deal of the world. He's been street boot-black, a sailor, a miner, a news-boy, and a hunter; and so he has the tricks of all those trades. But a better-hearted or jollier boy never lived than that same Billy Brady. He's cheating now for the fun of it, I dare say."

"Arrah now!" Billy was suddenly heard to exclaim, in a tone of surprise, "and where the devil did yees git that king av thrumpin'?"

"Me git him fair—no no cheat," replied Bold Heart, a grim smile of satisfaction lighting up his swarthy face.

It was evident by these remarks that Bold Heart had played the last card in his hand, and that that trick decided the game. Billy hesitated to play because the highest card won, and he held the nine only, while the Indian had led the king.

"Ing'ing!" exclaimed the young Hibernian, evasively, "did yees pick that keerd out av the deck—are yees thyring to chate an honest-hearted Irish boy? It's an inhuman savage monster yees ba to chate poor Billy Brady, the orphan child!"

"Me no cheat 'em—Bold Heart heap honest boy."

"Pon honor?"

"Yes; heap much honor."

"Well, that gits me, Ing'ing," replied Billy, scratching his head, in apparent perplexity, at the same time exchanging the nine for the ace of trumps at the back of his head. "Mees thought yees had the jack and I've been holding to catch him. Be Ing'ing, you do hold all-killing good hands, and if yees play a few years longer, y'll show a good game. But, fortin'ty for mees, I hold the ace, and so I'll take the trick and count the game for the little orphan child."

He threw down the ace and took the trick, much to the surprise and mortification of the Indian youth. Then he took up the deck and began to shuffle the cards, in the meantime endeavoring to give the Indian instruction in the science of cards. He omitted, however, that part of the instruction which had been so all-important to his success.

While thus engaged, a bullet suddenly tore its way through Billy's frowzy, bushy hair—a rifle rung out simultaneously upon the morning air, and with a groan of agony the Irish lad rolled to the earth.

The cards were scattered to the four winds, to the sorrow of Bold Heart, who, leaping to his feet, sought shelter behind the great rock, where he ran across Wild Dick and his two companions, Frank and Perry.

All believed that Billy had been killed, but when they saw the youth turn quickly over on his face, and level his rifle on an Indian coming toward him, they had reason to change their minds.

"They're coming—a hundred of them!" cried Frank, seeing the danger that menaced his friend; "fire, Billy!—quick!"

The sound of Frank's voice encouraged Billy, and firing upon the red-skin, he sprang to his feet and ran behind the rock, where he was greeted by the warm welcome of his friends.

No time, however, was to be lost in idle words. A score of savages were hurrying around the brow of the hill toward them, incited to vengeance by the fatal result of Billy's shot.

"Boys, we've got to fight a little, I'm thinkin'," said Wild Dick; "foller me up among the rocks on t'other side of this valley."

He led the way along the base of the hills—across the narrow valley and up an acclivity, on the summit of which they came to a halt.

In among the huge, sharp rocks that rose up like minute pyramids, they concealed themselves. Here they could command a tolerable view of the narrow valley and the opposite bluffs that rose a little out of the perpendicular.

Behind them were the lofty mountains, uprising almost straight into the clouds. The savages swarmed up the bluff on the opposite side of the valley, in hopes of gaining a view of the Boy Hunters, but the latter at once opened a deadly fire upon them and drove them under cover. Behind rocks and clumps of manzanitas they concealed themselves and opened a random fire on the Boy Brigade.

"Now, boys, for some sharp shootin'," exclaimed Wild Dick; "them red varmints will watch us like hawks, and if one of you want your head plugged with a bullet, jist raise it above a rock. They may try to git in behind us, but in case they don't, we've got to remain here till darkness comes to our relief."

"And wid nothing to ate or drink?" asked Billy with a lugubrious look.

"Y'ohin'," replied Dick, "unless Providence sends us a stray bite."

"All but that," rejoined Billy; "Providence gin'rally lets ivory cuss help himself."

"Boys, look yonder; do you see that Ing'ing's fever, yonder just above that big, red stone?" Dick asked, glancing across the valley.

All answered in the affirmative.

"But yees can't pluck it, me boy," said Brady to the young borderman.

"I can try," said the youth, and raising his rifle, he glanced quickly along the barrel and fired. The feather disappeared, but soon rose to view again. There was no doubt now, but that it was a feather in the head-gear of a warrior, who permitted it to be seen in order to draw the enemy's fire and thereby determine their situation.

Bold Heart tried a shot at the tantalizing object, but without effect, otherwise than to draw several shots from the enemy.

"Mother av Moses, red skin, and yees can shoot no better'n yees can play cards, now kin yees!"

"Oh! much talk!" was the laconic response of the immovable red-skin.

The feather was still in sight, and Billy resolved to test his skill in marksmanship upon the object. Thrusting the muzzle of his rifle through a little crevice in the rock that sheltered him from the enemy, he took a careful aim and fired. And to the surprise of all, the end of the feather was seen to pop upward from the rock and drift over into the valley on a current of air.

"By Je-whillikins!" exclaimed Wild Dick;

"you fothed it, Irishman. You're no slouch of a trigger-puller, be you?"

"Ugh! accident," ejaculated Bold Heart, half contemptuously.

"I'll prove that it wasn't, Ing'ing, some day," replied Billy. "If you and me sojourn together, I'll show you, Ing'ing, what a wee orphan child can do. But, red skin, do yees know that yees are dead broke? that yer cards are gone to the devil?"

"Yes, see you throw down—much scared—couldn't run—fall over log—he! he!" was the disjointed retort of the sensitive Bold Heart.

A shot from the foe now diverted the attention of the Boy Hunters from the not-altogether friendly conversation of Billy and Bold Heart. For some time a sharp firing was kept up between the foes, the savages' bullets, however, falling wide of their mark. The Boy Hunters had recourse to all the devices known in Indian warfare to draw the enemy from his cover, but to no purpose whatever. Each one with cocked rifle sat ready, and the moment a puff of smoke was seen on the opposite side, he would fire at the point where the smoke originated in hopes of finding a foe. But this mode of random fighting, without any known results, soon ceased, and all became quiet again.

It was now observed, for the first time, that Bold Heart was missing; but as there were so many places for him to have concealed himself even from his friends, no particular notice of his absence was taken. But, when an hour passed away, and the Indian had not returned, no little curiosity was aroused.

Why he had left so slyly, no one knew; and how he could have made his escape from their retreat without being seen by the enemy, was still another question that puzzled them.

Wild Dick could not imagine why his friend had acted so queer in going away without saying something to him. It seemed to Dick as though his red friend's usual confidence had been suddenly disturbed, and he had taken that moment to desert him and his new acquaintances. The more he thought the matter over, the stronger Dick's convictions became. And suddenly, as if to add strength to them, a fierce savage yell of defiance was heard far up the mountain side, calling the attention of the Boy Hunters in that direction.

"Lord A'mighty!" burst involuntarily from Wild Dick's lips.

Upon a slight eminence or table-rock, within plain view of the boys, stood the little figure of an Indian, clad in a scarlet smock. By his side stood three other warriors. In fierce, defiant tones the four hurled yells of wild triumph down to the ears of the four youths.

"Shades of Solomon!" again burst from Wild Dick's lips. "It's as I've been fearing, all the time; Bold Heart has deserted us and joined the enemy. That's him in his scarlet smock!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE BOY HUNTERS IN PERIL.

BOLD HEART'S desertion proved a serious blow to the Boy Hunters' feeling of security. Upon his superior knowledge of the country, of

wood craft, and of Indian cunning, they had based their greatest reliance. Now, they knew that this same skill would be brought to bear against them.

"Have you any idea what induced the young rascal to leave us?" asked Frank Casleton.

"I think I can answer that," said Perry; "because an Indian is naturally treacherous."

"No, friend Perry," replied Dick thoughtfully; "Bold Heart has always been true as steel to me and the whites. But he is very sensitive, and it almost kills him to be defeated at anything. If he has deserted us and gone over to the enemy, it has been through chagrin and mortification, the results of being beaten at cards and shootin' by your friend Billy there."

"He invited me to the contest with keerds," responded Billy, "and I bade the blaggard on principle. As to shooting, begob, and I bade him at that beca'se I could. Sorry I be fur the young rascal's pride; but I only want one shot at him, and I'll bet he'll bate me once—into the happy thrumping-ground."

The savages had all disappeared by this time, and all was quiet on the opposite cliff.

Bold Heart's desertion formed the general topic of conversation during the long hours of waiting and watching. Slowly indeed the day wore away, and like a friend, the shadows of night came on.

Wild Dick now proposed that they attempt an escape from their retreat, and having made known his plans and course to be pursued—which were accepted by his companions without a dissenting voice—he led the way down into the valley.

They were compelled to feel their way with extreme caution, not only on account of the foe, but of the innumerable pitfalls that beset their path. At times, again, they were compelled to creep along upon all-fours, and even feel with their hands; and more than once the cold air rushing up into their faces warned them that they were on the brink of a yawning abyss.

After trailing along the tortuous cliff for an hour or more, they finally succeeded in reaching the valley in safety.

Satisfied that the Indians were guarding the canon below the point where the Boy Hunters then were, Wild Dick resolved to take an opposite course, and in this way to give them the slip; so the four turned their faces up the defile and moved away as rapidly as the darkness and nature of the pass would permit.

Wild Dick was not acquainted with this canon—having never traversed it before; nor was he possessed of any great knowledge of the surrounding country, his operations having been confined chiefly to the plains of Nebraska and the eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains.

As they advanced, the young hunters noticed that the pass gradually grew narrower, and that the cliffs inclined from a perpendicular to a slight incline. Dick didn't like this narrowing of the way, and finally remarked:

"We'll do well, boys, if we don't git our heads into a trap yet. I'm inclined to think, from the nature of things, that we'll find an end to this canon pretty soon."

"I hope not," returned Frank.

But a moment later Dick's words came true: they reached the head of the pass, where further progress was disputed by walls, perpendicular and shelving, that rose up around them.

"Boys," said Dick, with slight trepidation, "I'm inclined to think we're juggled. If them red demons git our trail, we'll have a time to git out of this, sure."

"Perhaps we can find a passage, in the morning, leading through the hills into the other valley," suggested Frank. "I have seen defiles terminate in a cavern, which was but the continuation of the passage."

"That's our only salvation," added Dick.

"Then, begob, and we're to pass the remainder av the night here doing nothing, eh?" ejaculated Billy.

"That's all we can do, unless we turn back down the canon and fight our way out."

"I'm content to shstay roight here, me honey."

Billy's answer was the expression of the whole party's feelings; and so each one sought a comfortable position and seated himself to watch and wait. The moon came up, and although its rays failed to reach the valley, the darkness became "rarefied," as it were.

The youths had another foe now staring them in the face—gradually sapping the vital energy out of their bodies. It was a foe from which there seemed no escape, for a while, at least, and they endeavored to make the best of their situation. This new enemy was hunger. It was more than thirty hours since they had tasted food.

The quietude of their silent watch was suddenly broken by a pebble dropping from the ledge directly overhead. The quartette crept out and glanced upward. They saw a huge hairy mass on the very edge of the rock, plainly outlined against the sky. It was something possessed of life, for they could see that it moved slightly.

It was a bear. It stood gazing down into the gorge as if debating with itself as to how it could get down into the valley.

"Boys," said Wild Dick, "we're growing desperate hungry, and if we don't get down soon, and if we all pour a broadside into that bear where he stands, he'll tumble down here at our very feet."

"But the report of our rifles will bring the enemy down upon us, will it not?"

"Just as well die fighting Indians—better, too—than to stay here and starve to death, hiding from them."

"Blaze away, then," was the unanimous response.

Both Dick and Billy raised their rifles and fired almost simultaneously. A fierce groan and a lively scrambling on the ledge, were succeeded by a shower of dirt and pebbles. Then the huge body of the bear toppled over the cliff and came thundering to the earth with a crash that fairly shook the ground beneath their feet. What little there was left of life in the beast was crushed out by the fall.

"There is a king's feast for us, boys," cried Dick. "Roast ribs, roast sirloin and roast liver would make a dead man snack his lips."

"Sure, and the ribs and sirloin isn't roasted now, be they?" asked Billy Brady.

"I never knowed a live bear go totin' roasted ribs around with it."

"Won't a fire be another object to draw the attention of the savages?" Perry inquired.

"We'll make that in a niche under the ledge and behind some bushes," explained Dick. "I'll look out a place the first thing I do, and strike a fire. I'm hungry as a vulture."

The Boy Hunter departed and soon returned with the intelligence that he had found the entrance to a large cavern—an admirable place for their purpose.

While Dick was procuring the coveted portions of the bear, the others set about gathering dry sticks and chunks of wood for fuel. These secured, the party retired to the cavern, and entering it a rod or two, lighted a fire in a deep recess at one side of the main passage.

As the fire burned up, its light reached out through the cavern, revealing the large dimensions of the subterranean passage, whose unexplored extremity was lost to sight in the distant gloom.

All were too deeply interested in the forthcoming feast, the preparation of which was being superintended by Dick, to feel anxious about the dimensions of the cavern, just then.

It required some time to prepare supper, which was got up in true hunter style, and which demands no little skill and knowledge in order to retain the flavor of the meat and at the same time impart a tender juiciness to it. But Dick, boy though he was, proved equal to the task, and finally distributed among his friends a feast that would have tempted the palate of a king.

All ate with avidity and in a silence which attested their hunger. The feast being at length finished, a guard was stationed at the mouth of the cavern. This duty devolved upon Perry, who took his post without a word of dissent. Although the youngest of the party, he was a brave and fearless boy, and shrunk from no duty or danger.

And now the restless Billy Brady was on tip-toe in his anxiety to explore the cavern; and finally he resolved to venture alone through the labyrinth of the unknown vault. His friends tried to induce him to postpone the exploration until morning, but no persuasion could allay the inordinate curiosity of the youth.

Preparing a flaming torch of pine sticks he set out upon his journey. Frank Caselton watched the receding light until it had disappeared.

With great anxiety the return of the young Irishman was awaited. Those around the fire did not think he would be long away; for if the cavern was but the continuation of the gorge, it was possible that it did not extend far.

An hour wore away and Billy did not return. His friends thought it barely possible that he was slipping around, trying to play some joke upon them; and so their fears for his safety were not excited until another hour passed and found him still absent. Then they began to mistrust that all was not right—that Billy was either lost in the cavern or had fallen into danger.

Wild Dick shook his head dubiously, and expressed his fears in grave tones.

Frank Caselton and his friends had pledged each other, before starting out on that summer's tour, to stand firm by his companions, come weal or woe. And so Frank thought it a sacred duty to go at once in search of the absent one. Dick tried to persuade him to wait till morning, but the youth was determined, and procuring a torch, he set off through the cavern.

The night wore on, and to the surprise of Dick and Perry, neither Frank nor Billy came back. The same unknown fate detained both.

Wild Dick and his companion were completely astounded. They knew not what to do. That Billy and Frank had fallen into trouble they had not a single doubt; and that the same trap awaited them, was also more than probable.

"Well, what do you say, Perry?" asked Dick, at his wit's end in the matter.

"I cannot desert my friends without knowing that they are beyond all earthly aid," responded the heroic little fellow.

"Then I'll stand by you, Perry, through the whole."

Their future course being thus settled, they prepared to set off through the cavern. It was thought best to go without torches, that the enemy, if concealed about, might not know where to strike.

Dick took the lead, and keeping his hand upon the wall to guide him, moved softly forward, picking every step with caution. Perry with his hand on his companion's shoulder, followed.

In this manner they groped their way onward, for many rods. The cavern seemed endless—emblematic of eternity. They began to despair of ever reaching its extremity, when, suddenly, a faint twilight pervaded the gloom before them.

They had reached the outlet of the chamber or tunnel.

Creeping onward to the end of the passage, the boys saw that it opened into a little, oblong valley, upon all sides of which rose perpendicular walls of solid rock.

The faint gleam of a light before them arrested the boys' attention. The wrangle and gibber like that of a hundred wolves caught their ears. The dim, dark outlines of a tall building loomed up against the wall of gray rock, grim and forbidding.

The boys could not help shuddering. The secluded valley seemed overshadowed with some awful mystery.

Suddenly a dull, thunderous noise came rolling through the cavern, in startling intonations. The youths drew back and pressed themselves close against the worn, fluted walls.

That strange sound drew nearer. It appeared to be the pounding of hooved feet upon the stony way.

The youths held their breath in a horrible suspense.

The next moment a light held aloft by a man burst into view. The man was mounted upon a fearful-looking creature—a creature with great shaggy mane, gleaming eyes and smoke-streaming nostrils.

It was a huge buffalo. With a snort the beast brushed past the trembling boys and plunged into the little, rock-bound valley.

The youths followed to the mouth of the cavern to watch the grim, bearded rider. Something like the dull, crunching rumble of a heavy body rolled upon trucks, sounded in the passage behind them. They turned to seek safety again under cover of the cavern walls; but to their surprise and horror, found the passage blocked! A huge stone, reaching from wall to wall, and ceiling to floor, that their united strength could not move, had been rolled out from its secret recess in the wall across the opening, cutting the youths off from escape—imprisoning them in that mysterious valley over which brooded the shadows of death.

CHAPTER XII.

IDAHO TOM AT THE "OPHIR."

We left Idaho Tom at the cabin of Zedekiah Dee, the Mad Trapper.

Straight from the old borderman's quarters, Tom made his way toward Virginia City. He walked briskly, his spirits buoyed up by a remembrance of the fair, girlish face which had made such an impression upon his young heart.

It was nearly morning when he reached the slumbering village; and, ere he was within his own headquarters, the rosy sky had burst into flame.

The first thing the youth did was to make a thorough ablution of his person, change his dress and then throw himself upon a couch to rest his wearied body and recover that strength which only sweet and peaceful sleep can restore.

It was late in the afternoon before he left his bed. When he did, he repaired to a restaurant and ordered a lunch which he ate with a keen appetite.

From the restaurant, he went directly to the "Ophir Exchange," a mild name for a fashionable gambling house wherein fortunes were made and lost in a single night.

By this time the lights were ablaze in the "Ophir." The house was filled almost to overflowing with men of nearly every nationality. All was peace and quiet, if we except the babel of voices, pitched in the common tone, mingled with the clinking of glasses and rattling of dice.

Tom crowded his way through this throng, and entered a private room, separated from the main apartment by a curtain only. The room was furnished with a table, easy-chairs, and all pertaining to a first-class house.

A tidily-dressed waiter drew aside the curtain-door, and asked:

"What are your orders, sir?"

"Send a messenger for Jack Hill to come here at once. Then I will take a bottle of Madeira."

The man in white apron retired and soon returned with the wine and information that a messenger had been dispatched for Jack Hill.

Idaho Tom soon found himself alone. With a nervous movement and look of disdain, he pushed the wine and goblets aside, refusing to touch the costly beverage.

Throwing himself back in his easy-chair, the youth sunk into a reverie. The murmur of voices around him disturbed him not. The sudden boom of a blast far down in the mine beneath the city, where men worked and slaved night and day, he took no note of. His thoughts ran thus:

"Oh, Tom, Tom! outlaw as you are called, vagabond as you are! what ails you, my boy? Are you really in love?—in love with the mysterious maid of Tahoe?—the daughter of the Mad Trapper? But s'pose you are? She's an angel, and you're a rollicking young scamp. No pure, innocent girl would marry the Outlaw of Silverland. But then, Tom, why can't you do better—reform? Reform!—ha! ha! that's good! Talk of a boy of eighteen reforming! That's fast, devilish fast! But then, Tom, you can give up that growing taste for wine; quit cards and rambling about like a lost lunatic, and go to work and make yourself worthy of any girl in the land."

Having thus lectured himself, his thoughts turned to the future.

"I will," he mused—"I will quit all bad habits that make me an enemy to no one in particular but myself. I have done nothing mean nor criminal to debar me from the protection of the law and woman's love, although crimes without number bear, in connection with them, the name of Idaho Tom. But I know, and God knows, what I have done, and what I have not done. Yes, I will cast off my sins and turn my whole life toward winning that girl's love, if it can be done by honorable means. I will take no unfair advantage of her, and if I win her love and hand, my interest in the mines, judiciously invested, will be a good competence, and—"

The door opened, and the waiter said:

"Mr. Hill refuses to come unless it is absolutely necessary."

"It's absolutely necessary," said Tom, and taking a book and pencil from his pocket, he wrote upon a slip of paper the following:

"Dear Jack—Hurry to the 'Ophir.' Your dear friend lies in room 4, dying."

Away went the waiter with the dispatch to the messenger of the house.

In a few minutes Jack Hill came bustling into the "Ophir," a look of the deepest surprise and regret upon his face.

"Was he shot or stabbed?" he asked of the proprietor, as he pushed along toward room 4.

"Who?—what do you mean, Mr. Hill?" demanded the astonished proprietor.

Mr. Hill made no reply, but pushed on, and entered the presence of Idaho Tom.

The latter burst into a roar of laughter, rose to his feet, and extended his hand, saying:

"So you have come, eh? You do care something for your old friend, after all."

"Come! yes, and by the gods, I've a notion to shoot you, that your words might be in truth," and Jack Hill's hand sought his pistol in his belt, for he was mad—in earnest.

"Keep your temper, Jack," replied Tom, placidly; "I see you're out of sorts to-night."

"Out of sorts! Who wouldn't be out of sorts to receive a message that a friend was dying, and find out that it was a lie?"

"I wanted you, Jack; but for the world I can't see why you're so mad. Is it because I am not dying?"

Hill looked puzzled by the question. His black eyes snapped, his lips twitched, and finally he burst into a peal of pleasant laughter.

"Tom, you young vagabond, you always get the best of me," he said, and the two sat

down facing each other with the table between them. Then Hill went on: "But the fact is, Tom, I'm having the devil's own luck."

"Don't you claim 'ran out'?"

"Not twenty-five cents to the ton; and, Tom, I'm dead-broke."

"Can't you make a raise 'bucking the tiger,' or sell your claim?" questioned Idaho Tom.

"Sell thunder! Do you suppose anybody's going to buy worthless stock? Just listen to that blast in the mine under this very town! I'll bet it loosened a thousand dollars' worth of the raw material, and you, Tom, are one of the lucky stockholders in the lode."

"Yes, but, spendthrift that I am, I owe all that I'll get out of it in six months. I am here to-night to raise the wind. But, friend Hill, let me advise you."

"Certainly; by all means, if there is anything in your advice—money, I mean," returned Hill.

"There is; salt your claim and sell at assay value of a ton. You'll have no trouble in doing so."

"I know that, Tom; but, Lord A'mighty, I can't raise the saline crystals."

"Trust to to night's luck. The saloon's full of miners who, I dare say, have come here with bags of the precious evil."

"What of it? I couldn't raise a single 'breeze.' I'm in a dead calm on the equator of total bustedness."

"I have my watch, some jewelry, and that ring, that I will put up," said Tom, and he produced a beautiful gold ring with a costly diamond setting. "That," he continued, "was a present to me, and I prize it very highly; but I will let it go upon the stand. I must make a raise, then I propose to lead a different life—a better life, Hill."

"Whew! what's at the bottom of that resolution?"

"A woman."

"Hill burst into a peal of merry laughter."

"I know it would come to that," he said. "I always said you were so constituted that you couldn't resist the wiles of woman."

"Ay, but she's an angel."

"Then she has never flapped her celestial wings in Virginia City. I know all the girls here, and, I daresay, none of them even have the prospect of becoming angels."

"I did not mean an angel in a literal sense of the word, Hill. But she is very beautiful—a flower blooming in the desert, as it were. Away, amid the hills that environ the waters of Tahoe, resides that idol of my heart. And, Hill, some strange people reside there. They say they are trappers—perhaps they are."

"And perhaps they are the men who committed the robberies that have been accredited to Idaho Tom."

"They may be, but that does not lessen my love for the angel among them."

"She may be some man's wife. Boy, you must go careful."

"I'm not a fool, Hill. She's a girl not over fifteen or sixteen years of age."

The voice of a stranger near them, proposing a game of poker to some one, arrested Tom's attention; and as the person addressed declined to play, Tom pushed aside the curtain, and said:

"One or both of us will play you."

Thereupon two men entered the curtained apartment. Both were strangers, with rough bearded faces. They wore slouched hats, and acted as men would who wished to keep their identity concealed.

The men proposed a game of poker, and showed their honest intention by producing a bag of gold dust.

Tom put up his watch—a magnificent gold timer.

The four sat down, and the game began.

Tom and Hill played the strangers. Tom and Hill won.

"Salt," mused Tom, pushing the gold dust over to his partner.

"Again the watch was staked, and again Tom and Hill won."

The strangers showing no desire to relinquish the game, Tom put up his diamond ring. The strangers exchanged glances, and put up their third bag of dust.

Tom lost his ring, and the playing ended. One of the men took the ring and placed it carefully away in his pocket.

Tom ordered brandy and cigars. The strangers took of the latter, but declined to drink, as did Tom also.

They talked but little. The strangers kept their hats on and their eyes bent downward, though it was evident to Hill, who sat in such a position that he could watch their movements, that they were studying things around them closely.

At length, Tom and Hill found themselves alone.

"Who are they, Hill?" asked Idaho.

"Don't know—never seen them before. Reckon they belong over to Carson. I'm inclined to mistrust them of some secret motive."

"Indeed?"

"Yes—but, Tom, where did you get that ring?"

"Of a friend—why?" responded Tom, starting slightly.

The men exchanged significant glances when their eyes fell upon the ring; and they quit playing as soon as they got it. I'll venture an assertion, anyhow, that you'll hear from it again—that it is a missing link to some matter they're sifting out."

"Do you really think so?" asked Tom, thoughtfully.

"I do; I believe they are detectives."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 24.)

Victoria:

THE HEIRESS OF CASTLE OLIPPE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING.

AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL MYSTERY," "THE RIVAL BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.—CONTINUED.

"WILL your two or three words take long to say, Mr. Sweet?" asked Miss Shirley, still smiling—"which means, am I to sit down or stand?"

"You had better sit down, I think, Miss Shirley."

"Ah! I thought it was more than two or three words; but you had better be quick, for I have not much time to spare on this particular evening."

She sunk into a *fauteuil* of scarlet velvet; her gossamer robes floating about her like white mist; her graceful head, with its snowy veil, and golden curls, and jeweled orange-blossoms, leaning lightly against its glowing back; the exquisite face whereon the smile still lingered, as she lightly waved him to a distant chair. Truly, she was dazzling in her beauty and her splendor; but her companion was not dazzled—he was smiling a little as he took his seat.

"Well, Mr. Sweet, what is this terrible mystery of which papa speaks?"

"Colonel Shirley has termed it rightly—it is a terrible mystery."

"Indeed! And it concerns me, I suppose, or you would not be so anxious to tell it to me."

"Yes, Miss Shirley, I am sorry to say it concerns you very closely indeed."

"Sorry to say! Well, go on and let me hear it then."

"It is a somewhat complex story, Miss Shirley, and requires me to go back a long time—over eighteen years."

Miss Shirley bowed slowly her willingness for him to go back to the flood, if he liked.

"More than eighteen years ago, Miss Shirley, there lived, several miles from London, in a poor cottage—for they were very poor people—a certain man and wife—Mr. and Mrs. John Wildman."

At this unexpected announcement, Miss Shirley opened her blue eyes again, and smiled a little amused smile, as she looked at him inquiringly.

"This Mr. John Wildman was by trade a bricklayer, and often absent from home weeks at a time. One morning, very early, during one of these absences, a carriage drove up to the door, and a young lady and gentleman made their appearance in the cottage. The young lady appeared to be ill, and the gentleman seemed exceedingly anxious that she should lodge there. Mrs. Wildman was not many months married; they were poor; she wished to help her husband, if she could; the gentleman promised to pay well, and she consented. He went away immediately, and for the next two or three weeks did not make his appearance again, though money and furniture were sent to the cottage. At the end of that time, two events happened—a child was born and the lady died. Before her death, she had sent a message to the young gentleman, who came in time to see her laid in the grave, and consigned his infant daughter to the care of Mrs. Wildman before departing, as he thought, forever, from his native land."

During this preamble, the blue eyes had opened to their widest extent, and were fixed on the speaker with a little bewildered stare that said plainly enough, she could make neither head nor tail of the whole thing.

"Several months after this," Mr. Sweet went on steadily, "this John Wildman, with a few others, perpetrated a crime for which he was transported, leaving his wife and child—for they had a child some weeks old—to get on as best they might; the strange gentleman's infant with them. It was by means of this very infant they managed to exist at all; for its father, immediately on his arrival in India, for which place he had sailed, sent her plentiful remittances; and so, for nearly six years, they got along tolerably well. At the end of that time, she fell ill, and her husband's mother, who lived in some out-of-the-way place in the north part of England, was sent for, and came to nurse her and the two little girls—whose names, by the way, I forgot to tell you, were Victoria and Barbara."

During all this time his listener had been "far wide." But now she started as if she had received a galvanic shock.

"What! Victoria and Barbara! It isn't possible that—"

"Permit me to continue, Miss Shirley," said Mr. Sweet, bowing without looking up, "and your will soon recognize the characters. Yes, their names were Victoria and Barbara. Victoria, the elder by a few months, was the daughter of the dead lady; and Barbara, the daughter of the transported felon. Judith, the mother-in-law, came to take charge of them, and heard for the first time the whole story. She was a crafty old woman, was Judith, with little love for the daughter-in-law or granddaughter whom she had come to take care of. But she was wicked, ambitious, and mischievous, and a demonic plot at once entered into her head. A letter was dispatched to the gentleman in India—he was an officer too—telling him that the Wildmans were about to leave for America, and that he had better come and take charge of his daughter. Miss Shirley, he came; but it was not his daughter he received from the old woman, but her granddaughter. The children were not unlike; both had the same fair complexion, and light hair and blue eyes. The real Victoria was kept carefully out of sight, and he carried off the false one in implicit trust and placed her in a convent in France. Miss Shirley, I beg—"

He stopped and rose hastily, for Miss Shirley had sprung from her seat, and was confronting him with flashing eyes.

"It is false! It is false! I shall never believe it! What is this you have dared to tell me, Mr. Sweet?"

"The truth, Miss Shirley."

"My God! Do you mean to say that I am really—that I am not—Oh, it is too false too absurd to hear! I will not stop and listen to you any longer."

She turned excitedly to go; but he placed himself between her and the door.

"Miss Shirley, I beg, I entreat, for Heaven's sake hear me out! It is every word true. Do you think I would come here and repeat such a tale, if I was not positive?"

"Oh, *Mon Dieu*, what is he saying? Am I dreaming or awake?"

"Miss Shirley, will you sit down and hear me out?"

"Miss Shirley!" she said, with a sort of wildness in her look. "If what you have dared to say be true, I have no right to that name. It has never for one poor moment belonged to me."

"You are quite right; but the name, just now, is of little consequence. Will you be pleased to sit down and listen while I finish?"

"I am listening—go on."

She sunk back into the seat, not leaning back this time, but sitting erect, her little white hands clinging to one arm of the chair, the wonderful blue eyes fixed upon him, wild and dilated. Her companion resumed his seat and his story; his own eyes fixed on the carpet.

"The little girl in the convent, who bore the name of Victoria Genevieve Shirley, but who in reality was Barbara Wildman, remained there until she was twelve years old, when the Indian officer, who fancied himself her father, returned to England, his mother, and his native home, and his little girl, the supposed heiress of Castle Olippe, was sent for and came here. Miss Shirley, to tell you any more of her history would be superfluous; but perhaps you would like to hear the story of the real, the defrauded heiress, the supposed Barbara?"

He paused to see if she would speak, and looked at her; but one glance was all he dared venture, and he lowered his eyes and went hurriedly on:

"The sick mother knew nothing of the change until it was too late, and then she went frantic with grief. Old Judith, alarmed, as she very well might be, managed to remove her to London, by telling her she would recover her child there; and when there, gave out she was mad, and had her imprisoned in a mad-house. It is all very dreadful, Miss Shirley, but I

regret to repeat it is all quite true, nevertheless."

She covered her face with her hands, and sunk down among the cushions of the seat, quivering all over for a moment, then becoming perfectly still.

"The old woman changed the name of Wildman for that of Black; and during the next two or three years, lived on the money paid her by Colonel Shirley. That began, to give out, and she resolved to make Colonel Shirley's daughter find her more. Barbara—the children's names as I told you, were changed—was a pretty little girl of nine, and attracted the attention of the manager of a band of strolling players. She became one of the band—the most popular one among them—and for the next two years she and her grandmother managed very well, when one day they were astonished by the unlooked-for appearance of the transported Mr. Wildman, who had made his escape, and had found them out. He, too, took the name of Black—Peter Black—attached himself to the same company, and the three went wandering over England together. Are you listening, Miss Shirley?"

He really thought she was not, she lay so rigid and still; but at the question she partly raised herself and looked at him.

"Barbara Black—that was your wife that is—is then the real Victoria Shirley?"

"She is."

He did not dare look at her; but he felt the blue eyes were transfixed him and reading his very heart. It was only for a few seconds, and then she dropped down among the cushions again and lay still.

"They came here to Sussex six years ago, and strange enough settled here. The old woman and her son had each probably their own reasons for so doing. It is an out-of-the-way place, this little seacoast town, and the returned convict was not ambitious to extend the circle of his acquaintance; and his mother, probably, was actuated by a desire to see, how her wicked and cruel plot worked. So the real and supposed heiress grew up, both beautiful; but all similarity ended between them there—

one in the lap of luxury, envied, admired and happy; the other wretched, poor, little, cared-for and miserable. But I, Miss Shirley, know nothing of all this, loved her and married her; and it is only within the last

the pale brow, and touching it, tenderly with his lips.

"Oh, papa, don't!" she cried, in a voice so full of sharp pain that he scarcely knew it; and again the feeble struggle to rise from his arms commenced.

Wandering exceedingly, he lifted and placed her in a chair, just as Jeannette rushed in with smelling-salts and sal volatile; and Lady Agnes held a handkerchief steeped in Cologne to her temples. A crowd had collected by this time in the doorway, and seeing them, and revived by stimulants, she rose up.

"Papa! Grandmamma! take me away! Where is Mr. Sweet?"

"Here, Miss Shirley," said that gentleman, presenting himself promptly, with a very pale and startled face.

The well-bred crowd in the doorway, seeing by this time they were *de trop*, hurried immediately down-stairs, and no one remained in the drawing-room, except Vivian, her father and Grandmother, and Mr. Sweet.

"I knew no good would come out of this outrageous interview!" exclaimed Lady Agnes, flashing a look on her agent that might have scorched him, so fierce was its fire; "but I scarcely thought it would end like this. What have you been saying to her, sir? Out with it at once, and no more fooling, or I will have you thrust out within the next five minutes!"

"My lady," hurriedly began Mr. Sweet. But Vivian started up, all her strength recovered—more than her usual strength for that matter. In the light of her pride and power, she had been beaten to the dust; and in her last effort she reared herself higher and prouder than ever before in her life.

"Grandmamma, it is useless to talk to him like this. I have heard nothing but what I should have heard before—that he should have told us all long ago!"

"Miss Shirley, you forget—"

"I forget nothing, Mr. Sweet. In spite of all that you have said, I am convinced you have known the matter all along, and have been silent for your own ends. Those ends are not very difficult to see, and you have accomplished them."

"But, my dear Vivian, what are you talking about?" said her father, looking to the last degree puzzled. "What does this all mean?"

"It means that I am not Vivian! that I have never had a right to that name; that for twelve years I have been an usurper; that, in short, twelve years ago you were deceived, and I am no daughter of yours!"

The same unnatural look that had been in her eyes before came back, and jarred in her tone, whose very calmness and steadiness were unnatural, too. For the time being, quiet as she seemed, she was quite beside herself, or as the French say, out of herself, and could no more have shed a tear, or uttered a cry, or made a scene, than she could have sunk down at their feet and died. She was not even conscious of sorrow at the revelation; every nerve seemed numb, every feeling callous, her very heart dead. She only felt there was a dull, heavy pain aching there; but the swift and keenness of the stroke deadened every other feeling. She stood before them, a dazzling figure, and calm as if made of marble; her eyes wildly bright alone betokening momentary insanity. Lady Agnes and the colonel looked at her as if they thought she had really gone insane.

"Vivian, what are you talking about? I don't understand."

"It is plain, nevertheless, and sudden and quite unexpected as it is, I believe it all. It comes back to me now, what I had almost forgotten before, that Barbara was my name long, long ago, and that she was Victoria! Oh, I know it is true! I feel it in my heart!"

The colonel turned in desperation to the lawyer.

"Sweet, will you explain this? I do not comprehend a word of what she is saying."

"Colonel Shirley, I am sorry—I am very sorry—but it is out of my power to help you. The young lady speaks the truth. Twelve years ago you were deceived, and she is not your daughter."

"Not my daughter?"

"No, colonel! Can you remember twelve years back, when you came from India and received her?"

"Certainly, I remember. But what of it?"

"It was not the person you intrusted her to that gave her to you back, but an old woman—was it not?"

"Yes."

"Do you recollect what she looked like?"

"Recollect? No. I did not pay so much attention to her as that. What the deuce are you driving at, man?"

"Only that you have seen her since! She lives in Lower Cliffe, she is Black's, the fisherman's mother—she is old Judith!"

"By Jove!" cried the colonel, his face lighting up with sudden intelligence. "I believe you are right. That woman's face puzzled me when I saw it. I was sure I had seen it some place before, but could not tell where. It is all plain now. And it puzzled me the more, as she always seemed dressing to look or speak to me."

"She had reason to dread you. By her you have been most grossly and basely deceived."

"How?"

"The child she gave you twelve years ago was not yours, but her own granddaughter. This young lady is not your child!"

"What?" exclaimed the colonel, starting forward and turning very pale. "You villain! what are you daring to say?"

"The truth, Colonel Shirley, told by her own lips."

"Do you mean to say—do you dare to say that Vivian is not my daughter?"

"I do."

Colonel Shirley stopped and looked at him, mute with consternation. The lawyer stood before him very pale, but meeting his eyes without quailing—sincerity and sympathy on every feature.

"I know you are stunned by the suddenness of the shock, sir. I know it is hard to believe it at first; but it is Heaven's truth for all that! If you will only listen to me five minutes, I will tell you all I have told to—" a pause—"to this young lady!"

"Go on."

Mr. Sweet went on accordingly. The story was listened to with profound silence, and a long and ominous pause followed, passionately broken at last by Lady Agnes.

"It is a lie, from beginning to end! I will never believe a word of it! The man has fabricated the whole thing himself, for the purpose of trumping his own miserable wife upon us! Cliffe, if you do right, you will make the servants kick him out!"

"I will spare your servants that trouble, Lady Agnes!" said Mr. Sweet, whose face was perfectly colorless, as he moved toward the door; "but no amount of kicking can alter the truth; and justice must be had, though the heavens fall!"

"Stop!" cried Colonel Shirley, in a voice that made the room ring. "Come back! What

proof can you give of the truth of all this, beyond that of your word, and that of this old woman, whom you may easily have bullied into the plot?"

"The old woman is ready to depose to the facts, on oath; and you can visit the daughter, if you choose, in her madhouse, where she raves incessantly of her lost child, and tells the story to every one who visits her. Consider, too, the probabilities. What more natural, than that this wretched woman should, with her own granddaughter, be placed in affluence, when she had it in her power. It is not the first time the same thing has been done, and the young lady herself believes it."

Colonel Shirley turned to her; she was standing as before. She had not moved once, but her eyes had restlessly wandered from face to face of the speakers.

"Oh, Vivian, can you believe it?"

"I believe it all!" she said, quite calmly. "I can remember it with perfect distinctness now. I could remember it all along, like a dim dream, that long ago I was called Barbara, and that I played with another child who was Victoria. I believe it, every word!"

"Another thing, Colonel Shirley," said Mr. Sweet, emboldened; "this young lady has been said to resemble your family very much, because she is a blonde, and so are all your race. But Barbara is the living image of your dear wife. I remember her well. Here is her portrait; look at it for yourself."

He drew a miniature out of his pocket, and placed it respectfully in the Indian officer's hand. It was a likeness of Barbara, painted in ivory while in London, and strikingly like her. Vivian, at the same instant, drew from her neck the gold chain to which the portrait of the colonel had given her was attached, and placed it in his other hand. Strange and striking, indeed, was the resemblance; the same oval contour of face, with the deep bloom on the cheeks; the same profusion of dark, waving hair swept back from the broad brow; the same large, uplifted eyes, clear and bright; the same characteristic mouth and chin; the most striking difference being the expression. Barbara looked far colder, and sterner, and prouder than the other. Those faces settled the matter. The colonel was convinced, and his face seemed changed to marble, ere he looked up.

"The night you gave me this, papa," said Vivian, calling him the old familiar name, "I told you they were alike, and you said it was a chance resemblance. It was no chance resemblance, you see now?"

"I see! But, oh, Vivian—"

He leaned against a tall, ebony cabinet, and covered his eyes with his hand. Lady Agnes, who had been standing in dumb bewilderment all the time, broke out with a wild cry:

"Cliffe! Cliffe! This cannot be true! You cannot believe it!"

"Mother, I do!"

"Dear, dear grandmamma!" exclaimed Vivian, springing forward and catching her hand, terrified at her changing face. "I will always—Oh, papa, come here!"

For Lady Agnes, with a gasping cry, had fallen back quite senseless. Her son caught her in his arms, and Mr. Sweet violently rung the bell. Jeannette and Hortense were there in a moment. Colonel Shirley carried her to her room, and was back directly.

"Well, sir," he said to Mr. Sweet, "and what now?"

The lawyer looked really distressed and at a loss, but Vivian came to the rescue at once.

"The first thing to be done is, to go to Lower Cliffe immediately, and see this woman."

"I can never rest now until the whole matter is settled. If you will wait for me, I will be ready to go with you in five minutes."

The colonel took both her hands in his, and looked down, pityingly and tenderly into the death-white face.

"You go, Vivian! You look fit to die this moment!"

"I am not going to die. I never was so strong in my life. Don't say a word, papa, it is of no use. I will not keep you five minutes."

She disappeared in the rose room, and both gentlemen looked after her, more astonished by the sudden and complete change of the girl's whole nature seemed to have undergone within the hour, than by anything that had happened that night. True to her word, she was back in an incredibly short space of time, the bridal dress doffed, and arrayed in mantle and hat. Again objections were upon the colonel's lips; but they died out at sight of the pale, resolute face.

"We must go out this way," she said. "It will never do to go down-stairs and pass all those people."

She led the way to another flight of stairs at the opposite end of the hall, and the three went down, and out of one of the side doors, into the shrubbery! The bells had ceased to ring; but the fireworks were still blazing; the music still clanging; the people still dancing and feasting—the whole park like a glimpse of fairy-land. What a bitter satire it all was! and the keenest pang the colonel had yet felt, wrung his heart as he drew Vivian's arm within his own, and hurried, by sundry by-paths, to the village. Not one word was spoken on the way. They hastened along, and soon came in sight of the cottage. A light shone from the windows. The lawyer, without hesitation, opened the door and walked in, followed by his two companions. Old Judith, cowering and shivering, was in her usual seat. A tallow candle, in a dirty, brass candlestick, flared, and glittered, and dripped big tears of fat all over it. No one else was present. At sight of them, she shrunk away, holding out her arms, with a piteous cry.

"Don't take me away! Don't send me to prison! I confess it all—all!"

"What have you to confess?" asked Colonel Shirley, standing sternly before her.

"I changed them, I did! I changed them, I did; but I never meant no harm! Oh, good gentlemen, have mercy! I'm an old woman now, and don't send me to prison!"

Vivian bent over her, with a face like that of an angel.

"You shall not be sent to prison. No one will harm you, if you speak the truth. Am I your granddaughter?"

But the sound of the sweet voice, the sight of the lovely face, and the earnest question, seemed to act worse than all on old Judith; for she sprung up and fled into the furthest corner of the room, as she had done once before, long ago, at sight of Mr. Sweet, holding out her arms in a sort of horror.

"Speak, woman!" cried the colonel, striding forward.

"Speak at once, and tell me if you gave me your granddaughter, twelve years ago, and kept my child!"

"Papa, papa, she is in a fit!" exclaimed Vivian, in terror.

It was true. Whether from fear or some other cause, the wretched woman had fallen back in a fit of paralysis, her features blackened, and convulsed, the foam oozing from her lips—a horrible sight to look on. Of all the terrible changes of, that fatal bridal-night,

there was nothing to equal this; and Vivian covered her face with her hands, and turned away, shuddering, from the revolting spectacle.

"If you'll have the kindness to knock at the cottage next door," said Mr. Sweet, who had sprung forward and lifted her up, "I'll place her on the bed and send a messenger for the doctor."

The colonel obeyed, quite horror-stricken, and the women from the next house came flocking in. A man was sent in hot haste to Clifton for a doctor, and Mr. Sweet consigned old Judith to their care.

"Do any of you know where her son is?" he asked. One of the women did; and, with numberless courtesies to her master and her young lady, told how, a couple of hours before, he had entered the cottage, and, after staying for some ten minutes, had left it again in haste, and took the road for the town. Then, as they could do no more, the two left, and paused for a moment in the moonlight.

"Nothing more can be done to-night," remarked Mr. Sweet; "and, with your permission, I will return home."

"As you please; but I shall expect you very early to-morrow, and—your wife also. Now that we have commenced, this matter must be investigated to the bottom."

Raising his hat coldly and haughtily, the colonel turned away, and Mr. Sweet hurried off rapidly toward his own home. It was late when he reached it—the cathedral clock was striking eleven. Most of the houses were silent and dark; but a light burned in his, and his knock at the door was promptly answered. Elizabeth looked rather startled; but he did not notice that, and hurried at once into the parlor, where his wife usually sat up to all hours. She was not there to-night. And he ran up to her room. She was not there either. But something else was—something that made Mr. Sweet pause on the threshold, as if a hand of iron had thrust him back. Over the bed, over the floor, over the table, clear in the moonlight, lay all the gifts he had ever given her, before and after their marriage. Something gleamed at his feet. He stooped and picked it up. A broken ring—broken into three or four pieces—but he knew it at once. It was his wife's wedding-ring, broken and trodden in the dust, like the vows she had plighted—vows that were brittle as glass—slippery withies, that she had snapped like hairs, and trampled under her feet as she had trampled the ring that bound them. He saw all in an instant; and in that instant his face altered so frightfully, that no one would have known it. He tore down the stairs, livid with fear and fury, to find himself baffled in the very hour of triumph, and clutched Elizabeth by the arm in a terrible grip.

"Where is your mistress?" he cried, furiously.

"Please, sir, she is gone!" said the terrified handmaid.

"Gone! Gone where? Speak, or I'll strangle you!"

"Please, sir, I don't know. The gentleman went away; and the next I saw, she went out the back way, in her bonnet and shawl; and it was dark, and I couldn't see where she went."

"Who was the gentleman? Who was he?"

Mr. Sweet almost screamed, shaking the girl until she writhed in his grasp.

"Please, sir, it was young Mr. Cliffe. Oh, Lor', let go my arm!"

Mr. Sweet clapped on his hat and rushed out like a madman. Through the streets he tore, knocking down everything and everybody that came in his way. He fled through Lower Cliffe, through the park-gates, up the avenue, and in to the house. Everybody ran screaming before him; but he rushed on until he found himself in the presence of Sir Roland Cliffe, Colonel Shirley, and the crowd of unknown ladies and gentlemen.

"She is gone! she is gone!" he screamed, frantically. "They have both gone together. My wife has eloped with Leicester Cliffe!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 269.)

MY TRAVELING ACQUAINTANCE

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.

THEY have a good deal to tell about mining in 'Forty-nine, and the adventurous life of those days. Bret Harte has built up an enviable and justly-deserved fame, from his vivid word-painting of scenes and characters drawn from the same source, yet I firmly believe, were all the truths of the adventure and romance that hung round the Australian gold-diggers, brought to light during a period that extended from 1851 to 1855, old 'Forty-niners' would be considered quite tame and commonplace, beside them.

"I've had, for my own part, rather an adventurous life, for a man with good 'bringing up' and a fair education, and from being a ring-riding in a French circus to diamond-hunting in South Africa. I have met some rather peculiar experiences for one of my age."

"A cigar?" thank you, I like one—real Cuban too—haven't smoked such an one since we ran the 'Donna Inez' onto the reefs on the south side of Cuba. What kind of a vessel was she? Oh, well, some called her a 'free trader,' and between you and I, slaver would come as near the mark as anything."

"Slaving? Bless you, sir—hope you ain't trying to pump me. No, sir—we only had a load of cigars, that was to be run into New York without paying the duties, but Uncle Sam got wind of it, and sent the 'Pawucket' after."

"But where am I—oh, I was going to tell you something about the time I was gold-digging in Australia."

"Well, it was in '53, I think, I shipped to go second-mate of the ship 'Jason' from New York to Melbourne. I had some money to start with, for though I've been pretty careless I was never given much to spending it, so I'd saved up some four hundred dollars, and when we arrived out I had something like five months' pay due, so after I outfitted at Bathurst (for I left the 'Jason' in Melbourne) I had quite a tidy little sum to fall back on."

"I ran across a chap in Melbourne that I had known when he and I both had seen better days. Boston boy he was, and if I was to tell you his name you'd open your eyes, for now he's pretty well known, through his writings, all over the States—but, that's neither here nor there; I'll call him Dick, and let it go at that."

"He wasn't over and above flush—had just landed, and when, after we'd said a word or two, we found that we both belonged to a brotherhood, known and recognized the world over, it didn't take us long to strike up a partnership."

"As I said, we got our outfit at Bathurst, and tried the diggings to the north, along for a couple of hundred miles, but with poor luck."

"But, one evening, a chap fell in with us, who had made his pile, and was going down to Bathurst for a 'shoot.'"

"Tell you what, you chaps—he says, after

he'd eat supper and we were smoking in front of the camp—'just you get up out of this, and strike for the Oostlee Gulch. It lays just to the southward of Mount Alexander, about fifty miles west of Ballarat diggings. They've struck it rich there, and but precious few knows of it—my pard is there, a-workin' a claim; and the day as I left he took out a nugget that weighed five pounds an' two ounces, clean gold.'"

"So next morning we packed and got. We were somewhere about ten days on the journey, and none too soon, for the miners were coming in by scores. Well, we staked out a claim and went to work—and talk about your Eldorado! That's where gold laid a-top of the ground. A chap from somewhere in Maine—common sailor chap, that had got out in the goodness knows how, for he hadn't money or clothes, to say nothing of tools—picked up on the open ground, about a mile from camp, a lump of gold, mixed in with dirt and quartz, that weighed over seventy pounds. How's that for a yarn? But I tell you, sir, it's true—and more than that, he took it down to Ballarat—the Jew that he sold it to cheated him on the weight, and yet paid him about sixteen thousand dollars for the lump, and three months after the chap was picked up in the streets of Sydney, with nothing on but pants and shirt, and he raving crazy with D. T. Properly was too much for him, you see."

"But if I don't hurry up, I'll never get at the story I had in my mind when I began to spin this yarn. Well, after we'd done a right smart share of digging, we struck a vein, where we were in a fair way of making our pile, and in ten days we took out somewhere along about four thousand dollars in dust a piece, besides two or three nice little 'pockets' of nuggets, worth a quarter as much more."

"Two chaps taken up the claim that Hazleton left last week," said my pard, coming in with a bucket of water one night after supper, "and two more boyish chaps I never saw in the mines, and he'd hardly finished speaking before one of 'em come over to borrow a piece of pork."

"Nice, quiet, young man he was, couldn't have been over twenty, with hands as white as any girl's. 'Pard fellow,' thinks I, 'rather a hard show for a fellow brought up as I reckon you've been,' but he seemed to be full of pluck, and hopeful of making his pile in a short time."

"He said that he and his brother belonged somewhere near Boston, if I remember rightly, that they were orphans, and with the few hundred dollars that they'd scraped together somehow had resolved to try the diggings, having heard such marvelous accounts of the fortunes that were being made."

"But how happened you to buy an old claim?" said Dick, looking anxiously at the young fellow.

"Well," said the boy—for he was a mere boy—hesitatingly, "I'm afraid we've got rather a bad bargain, but the man, Hazleton, said that he'd taken out all he wanted, and was going home—and, in fact, he told such a straight story that I was led to buy it for a merely nominal sum."

"I motioned to Dick, who was about to tell the chap how he'd cheated, to keep quiet, for I didn't like to discourage him at the outset, besides, old claims sometimes yielded wonderfully well when carefully worked over, and as every other claim was taken up for miles around, I knew it would be a bad job for them to start out on uncertainties—and they so ignorant."

"Well, he brought his brother over next day, and as they pitched their tent next to ours, we got considerable intimate with 'em."

"Look here, old man," says Dick, one night, "do you notice anything peculiar about Joe Cassell?" (the name of the younger of the two) —I mean, about his looks?"

"Why, no," says I, looking up in some little surprise; "only that his rather a delicate bird for this region, and somewhat given to blushing—which ain't over and above common hereabouts."

"Well, pard," said Dick, confidentially, "unless I'm ever and ever so much mistaken, Charey Cassell's brother is nothing more nor less than his sister!"

"Pshaw!" said I—but as I said it, a thousand little facts came to my mind that would corroborate Dick's suspicion: the supposed boy's shyness, that all our proffered assistance and invitation to be neighborly had never been able to overcome—the fact that their tent was divided into two compartments with a bed in each—and many other little circumstances that I thought of, began to confirm me in the belief that Dick was right."

"Well," said I, after we'd talked it over a little, "it's none of our biz, anyway, Dick, so we'd best be clear-headed, and not let on that we noticed anything out of the way."

"Next morning, we were washing out our second pan, when I heard a fellow sing out:—"

"The 'children' has struck it rich!—hooray, boys! and I knew in a minute that the Cassells were in luck, for though they didn't seek any acquaintances among the miners generally, they were universally liked for their quiet ways, and were known as the 'children' by the most of our camp."

"I left Dick at the 'cradle,' and ran over to the lead where the young folks were working, and found that they had struck a bed of the richest ore that I had ever seen. They took out nuggets of pure, virgin gold, from the size of a swan-shot to that of a small potato, almost by the handful!"

"We had almost given up," said Charey, as white as a sheet with the suddenness of his discovery, "when Joe, here, unearthed those," and the so-called Joe, whose blistered hands testified to the severity of his labors, only murmured an indistinct reply, though apparently as excited as his brother."

"Well, everybody was glad for them, and all hands were congratulating them, when Hazleton, who had heard of their luck, came swaggering up to the crowd."

"He was the most powerful built man I have ever seen, and had, I believe, been a prize-fighter, although it was hinted that he had been dismissed from the P. R. on account of a foul blow, by which he had killed his antagonist."

"Since his arrival at the diggings, he had met with wonderful success, and had taken over fifteen thousand dollars' worth of gold from the claim which he had sold to the Cassells, supposing it to have been worked entirely dry, and had been to Ballarat on a spree, having only returned that morning."

"I mistrusted that he meant mischief when I saw his face flushed with bad brandy, and distorted with passion."

"Get to the tent, Joe," I whispered to the younger, "and bring me Charey's revolver—quick, boy!" and taking advantage of the slight confusion resulting from the falling back of the crowd at the approach of the bully, Cassell darted off on his errand."

"So, my covey," said Hazleton, as he saw the tempting pile of nuggets that Charey was carefully placing in a buck-skin pouch—

'supposin' you take and hand over the half of them shiners—I didn't allow for you makin' any such hauls as that.'

"There was a kind of half-audible murmur rose from the miners standing round, but such was the fear in which this notorious ruffian was held, that no one said anything aloud; yet, incensed by the apparent suppressed indignation of the bystanders, the bully, unslinging two navy revolvers, wheeled around, and leveling them at the crowd, said, fiercely:—"

"An' who's got any better right than I, I'd like to know, to the halves, 'specially when that little phindin' sneak' (pointing to Charey, who stood quietly during the harangue, awaiting a chance to speak)—'went an' cheated me outen my money, by shovin' a counterfeit check on the City Bank in Ballarat, onto me!'"

"You know, sir, that a bully can sometimes make himself believed, where a quiet man would have hard work to do. So the most of the chaps went off to their work, glad to get out of the range of the bully's pistols, and Hazleton, turning again to Charey, said:—"

"Now then, just hand over, else it'll be worse for you, young Hop o' my thumb!"

"I never was called a coward, though it be I who say it, and somehow a man never looks well speaking of his own exploits; yet, I'm free to confess, that every drop of blood in my veins tingled when I heard him say that."

"Look you, Hazleton," said I, "you're not going to bully this chap out of his pile, while I and my pardner are round; for I'd looked over the hill and saw Dick's long legs coming toward us, pretty lively, and that made me doubly courageous, for, in a fighting point of view, Dick was a host in himself, though a slimmer man than I."

"And who—be you?—was the remark of Hazleton, as he turned fiercely toward me."

"Before I could answer, Charey, who had had heretofore no chance to speak either in his own defense or otherwise, stepped in front of myself, and said—'Wait, Con!—this man has told a deliberate untruth about the check, which I can prove—he attempted to palm off a claim upon us, which he supposed to be worthless, and now he makes a demand utterly without reason—to which I most certainly shall not accede.'"

"But for you, Charey!" sung out Dick, who had just then come up, "you shan't be troubled while Con and I are round—eh pard?"

"Hazleton, seeing that we were not disposed to be intimidated, hesitated a moment, but the desire of gratifying the devil of gain seemed to overpower him, and with an oath disregarding our menaces, and seeing we were both unarmed, (for our revolvers and belts had been unbuckled while at work,) he grabbed recklessly at the sack of gold that Charey was holding. But the boy was too quick for him, and swinging the pouch or bag behind him, he seized a pickaxe and struck at the ruffian, intending no doubt to intimidate him by a show of resistance."

"Before either of us could interfere, Hazleton, had jumped back, and leveling his revolver, fired—the ball passing directly through the boy's heart, who fell forward on his face with hardly a groan."

"Dick was the first to recover from the momentary shock that had for the time unmanned us, and as attracted by the report of the pistol, the miners came rushing toward the spot, he sprung forward, but at that moment, young Cassell, who had just arrived breathless from his search after the revolver, it having been mislaid and got covered up with blankets in the tent—stopped, and with eyes blazing like stars, but with a face that rivaled that of the dead in pallor, said in a clear, distinct voice:—"

"Stand back Mr. T—, this is my affair—it is my brother lays there—and turning to the now shrinking Hazleton, who stood looking in uncertainty, as to what he had better do, Cassell said:—"

"Die!"—and before a word had been spoken, Cassell shot Hazleton plumb through the forehead."

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THE STORY OF STORIES!

In the next number of the SATURDAY JOURNAL commences

Buffalo Bill's Great Romance, DEADLY EYE,

The Unknown Scout; OR, THE BRANDED BROTHERHOOD.

Of this work of the noted "King of the Revolver," he writes:

MESSRS. SEADLE AND ADAMS: GENTLEMEN—I beg to state regarding "Deadly Eye, the Unknown Scout," the serial you are now about issuing, that it is the very best attempt I have yet made at authorship. Through the advice of a friend, once an army officer, I undertook to "follow the trail" of Wild Western life with my pen, and the result has certainly surprised me, and all of my friends who have read my productions.

But the fact is, I write most altogether from personal experience in Border life, and do not have to draw the long bow of imagination. With regard to "Deadly Eye," the story is founded upon facts, and the characters in the story are taken from real life.

Since my entering the literary arena, I have received numberless letters, which will excuse my vanity in saying that I am assured that "Deadly Eye" will prove a success.

With respect, yours,

WM. F. CODY.

Founded upon fact!

Taken from real life!

I write from personal experience!

This is the secret of the powerful impression the narrative produces. It leads the reader direct to the field; it introduces him to the very actors; it so infuses the wild interest of the incidents in the mind that the reader as it were

BECOMES A PART OF THE STORY!

Buffalo Bill does not "have to draw the long bow of imagination," for in his case truth is stranger than fiction. His life is full of experiences more exciting and astonishing than any mere invention of the novice, and upon that store of experience he will draw in his contributions to these columns.

Buffalo Bill, it will be remembered, was chosen as the

Guide to the Grand Duke Alexis,

in the great hunt and chase which the son of the Czar enjoyed on the Laramie Plains, and which he pronounced to be the greatest sport he ever participated in. Many were the tokens of strong personal regard which he bestowed upon Buffalo Bill for his watchful care, great skill as a hunter, sagacity as a guide and power over the red-men and the rough characters of the Far West.

Out of that brilliant hunt we expect the guide to frame us a story that will be a fine companion-piece to this

TRUE ROMANCE OF THE WILD WEST!

Sunshine Papers.

A Whiff from the Shore.

"The woman who deliberates is lost." The skies were leaden, the rain poured steadily and ceaselessly upon the lead-strewn earth, the wind moaned dismally through the withering willows and beat the dark, foam-rimmed waves angrily to and fro on the sands and against the dank, cheerless pier. And so we were all huddled in the hotel parlors, wraps about our shoulders and shivers about us everywhere, when we glanced at the dreary prospect without. It seemed that three months had dropped out of the calendar, and we had drifted from July straight into November. In the midst of the general discomfort, books and novels, and cards and yawns, were plentiful; and from over a card table, laughingly quoted, sounded distinctly through the chatter of many voices Addison's famous axiom: "The woman who deliberates is lost."

It came to me with a strange power and import, that nothing in the tone or connection in which the words had been said gave it. A meaning wholly new and significant. One sees so much if one's eyes are open, and one hears so much if one's ears are not closed, in the flutter, and whirl, and fashion, and glitter, and folly, and sin, of life in these summer resorts. They are very pleasant, very gay, very enjoyable. But oh, mothers, if you have control of your daughters—fathers, if you have influence with your sons, keep them gathered in some quiet home circle where the influences shall be all strengthening, purifying, refining. Do not let them come to be familiar with disgraceful intrigues, with thinly-veiled improprieties, with wine-room carousals and cold-blooded dissections of reputations. Keep them out of the insatiable tide of meaningless flattery and idle flirtation, of the cold waves of hollow fashion that drown every heart-true impulse of the mocking, woeful sea of gold that gives its treasures only to those who sell their lives and perjure their souls at the altars. Keep them away from all this, if you can. If they must some day be actors in this Vanity Fair, teach them first to speak an honest, brave, unhesitating negative to all that impresses their first free and natural impulses as dishonorable, cowardly, impure, untrue.

"The woman who deliberates is lost." Over eucher and bezieue, over my dinner and when I sought to sleep, the thoughtlessly quoted words haunted me. Oh! mothers and daugh-

ters, I thought, if one would teach and the other learn to say a frank, firm no!

Say no, girls, and refuse to listen when men pour idle nonsense into your ears, calling for as idle reply and deadening your sensibilities to an appreciation of the beautiful tenderness and loyalty of true love, when some heart shall burn its incense of true love at your shrine. Say no, and turn firmly away, when men whose lives you know are stained with excesses and license ask you to give yourself to their embrace for a dance, to lean on their arm for a promenade, to accept a seat in their carriage. What right have these men to be smiled at, and petted, and sought, and allowed the society of sweet young maidens, and courted, with absolute freedom from their vices, in circles where honest, manly worth, without a golden key, can find no open sesame?

Take the matter in your own hands, girls of America! You who are free to make your own choices, should lead your sisterhood of all nations by womanly loyalty to your privileges. Hold your standard high. Say to men you cannot waste your lives in riotous living—you cannot commit sins nor riotous living—the dissolute—you cannot regard our sex cynically and help to thrust some to a level lower for knowledge of you, and then hope to come together in your profaned hands its sweetest flowers. It is time that the young women of our land refuse to weigh a man's handsome face, or social position, or long bank account, against his misdeeds. Let honest work, and true nobility, though paupers in dollars and cents, be winners of the good and pure; and womanhood will gain a brighter luster, and manhood will strive to reach a higher goal.

Say no, girls, when you are asked to discuss false theories and listen to loosely liberal views of social questions. Say no to any proposed alliance where the heart is not the prime factor in the demonstration. Say no to every whisper of disloyalty, and temptation to questionable companionship. Make the rule of your life to answer a prompt and earnest no to all things unworthy true womanliness, that in days to come no saddening, sickening reflections concerning the loose views and soullessness of our sex shall be forced on ever so keen observers of the lives that win in soul, heart, and gold races.

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

IF.

We think that, if we had this, or only could do that, we should be perfectly happy and contented; we should never grumble again; our cup of joy would be so full we should never murmur more; but if our oft times foolish wishes were gratified the reverse would be the case.

If we had fifty thousand dollars we would crave more, and be extremely dissatisfied because we couldn't get it. If we only had money we think we would do the greatest good with it; we would benefit churches, asylums and schools with it, and such a revolution and reformation as our money would make in the world would cause nations to stand aghast!

Would we do all this if the money were really and truly in our possession? It doesn't seem to me as if such really would be the case. More likely we would sit by the fire and growl because it wasn't more, or because we were fearful it wouldn't last us through all our lives. We'd think that only had sufficient for our own comfort, and couldn't spare any for charity. We would leave others to look after the needy. It is easy enough to give away money, in thought, when we are not in possession of it, but the reality is not quite so pleasant. The money once ours, we have multitudinous ways to dispose of it. We discover uses for it which we never thought of when we had it not. Now, if we could do without these things when we were poor, couldn't we contrive to do without them when we grow rich?

When our friends turn from us, we take it deeply to heart, and we think if we had been less petulant with them and put up with their foibles, we might have kept them with us. If we hadn't said so many harsh things to them, and of them, we might still possess their friendship and their love. While we are brooding over these things, we are treating those friends who are left to us in the same way we treated those who have left us. We try by no means to win back those who are estranged, and we do not endeavor to keep the friends we have. We pine because others have left us, and we are not thankful for the ones that are spared. Well, we are an inconsistent, foolish set of human beings, anyway, and it is time we came to our senses.

You needn't say you don't care because your Johnny has jilted you for some one else, for I know you're not speaking the truth, or you wouldn't keep awake half the night, sobbing and moaning and remarking that "There is no trust in mankind."

It always strikes me that that last remark is a very foolish one, or that some people, who utter it, are very foolish, because hundreds are perfectly willing to test that trust. I guess it must be human nature, or the girls would not dare to approach the male sex as they do. I've lost all faith in these creatures who are so fearfully broken-hearted and crack-brained, because Polly or Sammy has "gone back on them," for I have invariably noticed that their grief wasn't eternal, and that they were perfectly willing—almost too willing—to put trust in the next Polly or Sammy who came along.

"If we were only dead and away from all the blight, sin and misery of this world, we'd be much better off," is a plaint you'll often hear. I don't think such speeches are pleasant to listen to, or for any one to give utterance to, and it would be serving the speakers right if you boxed his ears, because it is a most hypocritical speech. You know very well that these speakers are the most frightened of all individuals if they are laid on a bed of sickness, for fear they will die. What dissatisfied creatures they are! They are continually wishing they were dead, and yet they don't want to die! What they do want, I should like to be informed.

We think it extremely silly when we hear children wish they were grown up and could be "big folks," yet all the while we forget how much more childish and silly are our wishes. A child could be excused on account of its youth and ignorance of the experience which we, who are older and who ought to be more wise, have. There isn't any such excuse for us, but we do not seem to view matters in that light.

"It" is a little word, but it seems to come extremely handy to hosts of people, by the frequent use they make of it.

Oh, yes, if we had the power we would accomplish so much! I don't know but we'd move mountains and become miracles of goodness; yet it is a most peculiar circumstance that we make but poor use of the power we are possessed of.

Don't you know the old adage, "If wishes were horses, beggars might ride," and I think it a very good idea that some of the foolish wishes many have never are realized. I have

just as foolish wishes myself sometimes, but when I come to think over them calmly, I feel very well contented with my lot in life, and am thankful for being as comfortable as I am. If it is better for us to be better off, be assured we will be so; although vain wishes will not bring the coveted fortune. EVE LAWLESS.

Foolsap Papers.

Whitehorn's Motor.

WHEN I say this is an age of invention, the assertion is not an invention. By-and-by everybody will have a cast-iron man that will do his walking, sleeping, eating and breathing for him, and he can have all his time to attend to other people's business and thrive.

The secrets of mechanics must be revealed. I have discovered very many of them myself, though I have got the credit for but few; but it don't matter; I live for humanity.

I was the first one to demonstrate the fact that if a round log be taken to the top of a hill and let go, it will roll to the bottom. This great discovery has been so well proven since that there is no doubt about it. It is a discovery of great service, but they have never seen fit to knight me yet, and I have lost money by letting the secret out.

I was the inventor of the corkscrew, and must say that I have the blessings of all persons who can afford to use them.

A great deal has been said about the Keeley Motor, which is destined to revolutionize the motive power of the age.

But let me whisper in your side-ear the fact that I was the one to discover this same thing, of making one bucket of water lift a whole reservoir, many years ago, when I had no neighbors, and had nothing else to do but to look into my own affairs to pass away time.

The engine which I constructed was called the Whitehorn Pro-Motor. It took seven years of hard study, because I was working against one of the fundamental principles of nature, and of course all natural laws had to be re-modelled before I could begin.

Every difficulty was overcome, and the machine was a success—one of the most successful successes that ever succeeded in any succeeding age.

Fifty thousand dollars I expended in its construction, and the matter was kept a profound secret. I built the engine in a barn, and the whole inside was one mass of endless machinery.

One drop of water would produce a force of four hundred thousand pounds, though the machine was a little too large for practical use in the kitchen for peeling potatoes or shelling peas.

My venerated mother-in-law got into the barn one day and discovered the engine, but accidentally touching a wrong spring, she was blown away with a force of forty thousand pounds to the square inch.

Nothing was found of her, nor even her will. It troubled me a great deal at the time, and we hunted everywhere, but she was gone. A small hole in the roof was very suspicious, and it is supposed she went on her upward way bodily. I was sorry, because I never could hope to get another mother-in-law, and it seemed to be too bad. You don't get a new mother-in-law every once in a while in this country any more.

This Pro-Motor was so powerful that it could raise—well, it could raise potatoes without straining itself.

It could go to work and with forty thousand pounds pressure could raise a hurricane.

So great was its lifting power that it lifted a note of mine for one hundred dollars which the holder of it said no power in the world could raise. He had long given up all hopes of any kind of a machine raising it.

As the machine was rather large to be portable, I made small models of it for convenience in carrying in the vest-pocket, and everybody could carry one.

Whenever a life-insurance agent came in to talk to me in an interesting conversation remarkable for purity of style and fluency, concerning new rates and improved plans, all I had to do was to apply this Pro-Motor to him, and he went out of the front door and through several opposite buildings, and they couldn't find enough of him to pin his name on.

One drop of water would generate power enough to completely overturn the State Legislative proceedings. But a little whisky produced a force equal to the combined power of sixteen thousand horses, four thousand mules, three thousand cats, two thousand rats, fifteen hundred spiders, one thousand bedbugs, and nine hundred fleas. Oh, but it was a powerful agent.

It could compel a man to fork over any little bill he owed you, no matter how fast it may have grown—stuck by the mucilage of many ages.

It was the only machine I ever knew that could raise thunder without breaking a trace.

I put one of them under the sill of my neighbor's house one night, and it turned it over so easily that he didn't know of it until he woke up in the morning and found himself standing on his head.

Crossing the Atlantic once, I applied a pocket Pro-Motor to the steamship, unknown to anybody, and she went so fast that the friction on the waves was so much that they took fire, and as far back as you could see ran one long wake of flame. All was consternation on board; the stars and moon and sun flew by like sky-rockets. Everybody thought we were going to the d—estimation rather rapidly. I never let on.

It is the only thing that I know of in this world that will remove mountains or corns, and is the only thing strong enough to get up and carry itself off.

Horses or locomotives have no more business in this country.

The only trouble of it is that the power is much too strong for a man to manage. No one ever knew before just what the capabilities of a little drop of water were, and how it can be developed. You see I have had a good deal to do with water—in a scientific way.

Yes, I was several years ahead of Keeley, but I never said anything about it.

Beware of imitations.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

The way to be righted yourself, is to be careful not to wrong others.

The readiest and best way to find out what a future duty will be, is to do present duty.

He never yet put out a dim candle that was lighted at the sun of righteousness.

A scant breakfast in the morning of life whets the appetite for a feast later in the day.

There are words which are worth as much as the best actions, for they contain the germ of them all.

There are many who talk on from ignorance rather than from knowledge, and who find the former an inexhaustible fund for conversation.

Topics of the Time.

Wo man's rights are making rapid progress in Denmark. The University of Copenhagen now admits women students the same as men, only they can't study theology or pass examinations that would authorize them to preach. Can't preach! Much good a university education will do them. Qualify them to talk and then deny them the right. Go for King Christian, ladies; he's a heathen to sanction such an outrage.

Providence, R. I., is agitated over a case, or rather a number of cases, of mysterious disappearance. Now that the prohibition law has been repealed, the liquor dealers complain that cases of champagne, brandy, and other beverages seized by the State constables, come back to their owners about half or two-thirds empty. As the constables are appointed to office on account of their strict temperance principles, it is not to be presumed that they could explain what became of the missing liquors.

Speaking of woman's field of labor recalls the fact that Miss Mollie Allen, of Lakeport, Cal., has again received \$20.50 from the superintendents of Lake county on account of squirrel tails, the work of her own rifle in less than two weeks. Wonder if Miss Mollie is pretty? Pretty girls shoot well with the bow and arrows made by Cupid, and often take kindly to powder, and like balls, and can fire hot shot with precision when the game is hard to bring down; but this spending of time on squirrel tails leads us to believe Mollie is homely and haggard and desperate.

Byron, a village on Rock River, Illinois, has always been remarkable for a rigid exclusion of the liquor traffic. A German, recently, tried the experiment of opening a lager beer saloon there. It remained open one day; and the same night a billiard table, and several of the principal citizens destroyed the stock, smashed the billiard table, and scared the proprietor out of town. As Byron loved his gin, played a good game of billiards, and to this day rests in bier, we suggest that the name of that town be changed to Bret Harte or some other well-known temperance man.

There is a remarkable cat living in Whitneyville, Conn., near Lake Whitney. It is seven or eight years of age, and goes ashore for its meals. It will stand in water up to its thighs, and seize small fish and eels. Some of the latter have been twenty inches long. The greatest achievement of this cat was the capture, recently, of a fish weighing three pounds. The animal turned the fish in shallow water, and then pushed it ashore. Fish stories are at a discount after this. The next we'll hear of that cat she'll be playing cat-cher in a base-ball match. She evidently is equal to it.

Our lady readers will be pleased to hear from Paris. The last fashion bulletin announces that all stylish dresses are accompanied by two waists—white and black, and goes as high as the neck, and the other a high basque. The basques of very elaborate costumes are cut square-neck or heart-shape, and if of silk the sleeves are generally made of some diaphanous material, lace or gauze. The delicate Louisiana silks are made to go over soft-shouldered and damask skirts. Those of very light and delicate colors are properly trimmed with point d'escluse lace and damask ribbon. The skirts are nearly always demi-train, and the tabliers are very fully draped and arranged in irregular, fantastic, yet graceful folds.

A certain minstrel manager advertises in one of the sporting papers for a tenor singer, "who whose vocal abilities are first class, and who knows how to work up a laugh when the end men are getting off a joke." Nasby won't answer, for he has lost his voice and gone into the advertising business; Mark Twain is too lazy to work up a laugh, and besides, his tenor is rather base; our own Whitney can't serve, with his mellifluous tones, for he has resolved to run for Congress on the inflation ticket; the Danbury News man don't know the difference between a horse-diddle and a canary bird, and never worked up a joke in his life; the Detroit Free Press man is going to study theology, and like all good printers, only sings a prano; so there's nothing for that manager to do but commit suicide.

A leading city journal evidently don't think a "college education" all that is necessary to fit a young man for life. It remarks: "If the colleges educate a few master minds for professional and literary life, they also spoil many excellent farmers and business men. How many third and fourth rate lawyers, doctors, and ministers there are who might have made first-rate farmers and tradesmen if they had not gone to college and learned to look down upon their fathers' calling! Mediocrity cannot be developed into genius by a college forcing process any more than a dandelion can be made to grow into a rose-geranium." This is one of the truest things that can be said. The amount of mediocrity entering the professions, with college diplomas in hand, is something frightful. How these geniuses are to live who can guess?

The Italian cardinals are very rich. Each of the princes of the church has an annual income of 30,000. In addition, Cardinal Patrizi has 40,000, as Cardinal Veneri, and an equal sum from his benefices, without speaking of his large private fortune. Cardinal Amat draws 110,000 from his enormous benefices; he possesses, besides, immense estates. Cardinal di Pietro receives 60,000, as bishop of Albano, and an equal sum is allowed him by Portugal. Cardinal Basciani has a similar revenue to Di Pietro. De Luca possesses an annual revenue of 150,000. The casual dues alone bring in 40,000, to Cardinal Bigarr. Berardi touches 500,000, a year. And, pray, why shouldn't they have princely incomes? If people will have princes they must give them the privilege, in the church or out of it. Style costs. Our own good Cardinal McCloskey is, we hear, to be provided with an income which will show foreign potentates how we republicans can do it, when we try.

The habit of charging dull times upon Congress is as absurd as to charge Congress with responsibility for rain, or drought, or grasshoppers. Congress really has nothing to do with the matter except that it made money cheap, as a "war necessity," and, as a consequence, everybody lived far beyond their means; we spent more than we earned; we overtraded with Europe; we ran deeply in debt abroad and at home; we "built castles in Spain;" hence, when the bubble burst with Jay Cooke's failure, and firm after firm failed, and down with a smash like the falling of a shell building—an utter ruin—we awoke from a fever-dream to a realizing sense that inflation and cheap money were no more healthy to the body politic than too much whisky to the body personal. We'll never see the country prospering again until a dollar is worth one hundred cents and business is done on a basis of fixed currency or cash values. Hard times are a misnomer for an evil; they are the remedy not the disease, for out of these very hard times must come a future healthy and stable prosperity. This is our view of the situation.

The whole Pacific coast, especially California, with all its mountains, is perpetually rising, and at a comparatively rapid rate. The land containing in its bosom our great American lakes is slowly sinking; while southern Indiana, Kentucky, and the surrounding States are rising. Geological investigations prove that our great lakes, except Ontario, had formerly a southern outlet; until, by gradual northern depressions and southern upheavals, a northern outlet was formed from Lake Erie into Ontario, about 40,000 years ago. This outlet, the Niagara river, is still wearing away its channel. The division line of the watershed south of the lakes and the Mississippi valley, has since that time been steadily traveling southward; and when Chicago recently turned the waters of Lake Michigan, through the Chicago river, into the Mississippi valley, the old state of affairs was artificially re-established. New Jersey is sinking, with New York city and Long Island, at the estimated rate of about 10 inches per century. The coast of Texas is ascending at a comparatively rapid rate, some observers stating that it is as much as 30 or 40 feet in the last half-century.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unvaluable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Box MSS." MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wasted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note-its paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unsuitable to us are well worthy of us.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

These offerings we must decline—returning such as held stamps inclosed: "Making Love," "Lover's Request," "Adella," "Fourth of July," "Night on the Alps," "Four Years' Eclipse," "A Spurned Whale Chase," "The Tragedy of the Old Crane," "A Hunt in Mexico," "The Dark-alley Beauty," "Mose of the Street Shop."

We file for use "Johnny Hatch, the Boy Detective," "Constancy," "The Lads and Lassies," "A Boy's Prize," "Miss Takeout's Sutor," "Old Links, the Surveyor."

Benny Boy. Boy sailors have a rough life of it. Don't go.

A. A. K. Hotel clerks receive from \$30 to \$100 per week—according to their money value.

D. N. J. Never write on both sides of the paper. We never use such MS.

E. A. D. Write by postal-card. Have no needs in the direction suggested.

A. L. F. Elmira. MS. was returned. It was not "fully prepaid," as you will see by wrapper inclosed.

Harvey B. Your package comes six cents under-paid in postage. Please remit, and be careful in future.

BLUE BELLE. We know nothing of the individual and firm named, and advise you to know as little.

KATE M. Keep no company "on the sly." Let your parents be the judges of what is best. Be assured they are your best advisers.

Mrs. DAVID L. G. "A good help" is what every housekeeper wants, but will be as difficult to obtain as a prize in a Kentucky lottery advertised in the religious journals.

MISS MARIA C. Lola Montez was of Irish birth. She did not dance in America until Dec. 29th, 1851, after her career abroad. She died in New York city January 17th, 1851, a repentant and sorrowing woman.

ORCHARD GROVE. There has been a large decrease in immigration to this country from Europe of recent years. In 1882 the number was 365,000; in 1885 427,893; but in 1874 the figures were only about 300,000.

IOWA. Write to Navy Department, Washington. The catalogue and last annual report of the Naval School will give you all required information. The Congressmen nominees not appointed. You are only appointed after successful examination.

T. E. H. Book-keeping, as a calling, is a good one where there is success in obtaining a start. You write well and doubtless will do well. One thing: be patient, steady and scrupulously faithful, under all circumstances. Then success is sure.

GOBERT JOHN. Good horses are very cheap in New York. Sell your team where you are by all means. A racing horse is the worst possible investment for you, inasmuch as it costs you so much a matter of roguery that all decent men give a wide berth to the race-course as a profession.

LITTLE BONANZA proposes a mathematical question for some of our readers to solve: "A ship sails out of New York harbor and is going 12 miles an hour, and coming back at the rate of 8 miles an hour; how many miles out does the ship go? The problem is simple enough; let some one solve it."

CHARLEY DEITZ. The number of Germans now residing in this country, who were not born here, is fixed at 2,600,000, but it is estimated that nearly one-eighth of our adult population is of German birth or immediate parentage. The idea that they comprise "one-quarter of all our people" is very erroneous. The number of Germans is very small; do not see how any one is to ascertain. Upon the basis of one seventh of the whole the German vote ought to be 1,000,000.

MYRONA. Owege. You never should eat with both hands full. Drop the bread when using the fork.—It is immaterial whether you take your seat from the right or left. Do as your neighbor does so as not to collide. On leaving table arise by the right and let your chair remain. Cheese is to be eaten from the fingers, not with a fork. Never break bread or cake in your coffee. Eat either and sip the coffee. Your hair is rising in a very fair, and your letter well expressed.

M. O. ZANE, Phila., Pa., writes: "While keeping company with a lady I gave her an amethyst ring. Now I am engaged to another lady, and the first lady is constantly showing the ring and endeavoring to make it unpleasant for us. I did not give it as an engagement ring, and refused to take it back when she offered it. Was I right or wrong? You are right enough, and the girl is proving herself most unyielding. Take no notice of her conduct. To your other question: I am not sure, but I think less; you can ascertain most satisfactorily by writing to any large music-store. Your writing is open to improvement, and you could, and should, spend considerable time in endeavoring to improve yourself in the common English branches of study, as your orthography and composition are sadly deficient."

M. H. C. N. Haverford. We would advise you, by all means, to marry Annie. We have waited upon her a long time, and it is due to her, and to yourself, if you are a gentleman, that you ask her to be your wife. It is not strange that she should doubt you, when you have given her so many opportunities so to do. Make up your mind now, like a man, and Annie should punish your past indecision with a refusal, should you not be so easily consoled, why, give Fanny a chance.

QUESTIONER, Wilmington, Del., says: "Is it good taste for a person to sweeten any article of diet by taking the lump of sugar in the fingers? I have noticed a table should a person wait on the strangers around? What should a person do when invited to a wedding he cannot attend? It is a common French practice to use the fingers to convey lumps of sugar from the bowl to the cup of beverage to be sweetened. But the good taste of such a habit is not admitted among English and American people, and the practice is confined exclusively to restaurant tables. At a hotel table waiters will supply the needs of each person, and your duty to your neighbors is only to pass pleasantly something they ask you to hand them as a convenience. Inclose your visiting card to whoever gives the reception, if there is a reception; otherwise, if the lady is to give a party, or two previous to the wedding, to the bride or bride's parents."

PHILIP Y. Austin, Nev., writes: "Eight months ago I came from my Eastern home here, at the earnest request of my brother, who is engaged in a very successfully in business. I was engaged to a young lady near my home, who promised, if I succeeded, to marry me when I should return for her. After I had been here three months she wrote that she would never marry me unless I would promise to live East. I said I would do what I could to please her. Three months more would two months ago, since when I've never heard from her. I have written repeatedly. What would you advise me to do?" If you have written repeatedly it is evident that some of your letters must have reached her and she does not choose to answer them. You can only go home and find out the entire truth. But

CONSTANCY.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

Still with the fond endeavor
My spirit sighs for thee,
As in the days when never
A cloud proved Fate's decree,
And thou wert kind to me,
In love to last forever.

Still with the fond devotion
My glance is meeting thine,
But the lone heart's sad emotion
Is now alone, oh mine,
Love's light has ceased to shine
On a wreck in life's commotion.

Lovers who vows are breaking
Each with a tear-wet eye,
Hear Cupid's love-tuned sigh,
In wooing stealing by,
Their very heartstrings shaking.

Still with the fond endeavor
My spirit sighs through years;
As in the days when never
There came a cloud of fears,
I brave both Fate and tears
Though we were forced to sever.

Harry's City Wife.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

A BRIGHT, sweet, sensible face, with eyes of clear, deep gray, and lips of vivid scarlet, framed by abundant braids of dark, glossy hair, a plump, smoothly-rounded, trim shape, and pretty little hands—these were what Harry Markham looked at, as he leaned back in the great chair and gazed at his betrothed wife, Nettie Gale.

Not one of your grand beauties, too dazzling even to be found except in stories, and very seldom good for anything but show when they are found, but quite pretty and sweet enough to make it a pleasure to look at her, and not too "angelic," and all that nonsense, to be other than she was—a warm, living, loving, natural girl.

Harry Markham, book-keeper in Hartley's big establishment, with a salary of eighteen hundred, was engaged to Nettie Gale, and loved her with all his great soul. Yet, notwithstanding this, and the fact that their wedding-day was only four short weeks ahead, there was a cloud on Harry's face, and he sighed heavily, as he leaned back and looked at her.

"What worries you, Harry?" asked Nettie, smoothing his coat-sleeve with her soft fingers. "May I know?"

Harry sighed again. "You must know, I suppose. But I hate to tell you. I got a letter from mother to-day."

"Well?" There was a little note of inquiry in Nettie's voice, and her fingers still stole caressingly over Harry's sleeve.

"It wasn't well, and there's the fact. Mother is a good, kind soul as ever lived, Nettie."

"I'm sure of that, from her picture," interrupted Nettie.

"But she is apt to be bitter in her prejudices—"

"I should judge that, too," again put in Miss Nettie.

"And, unfortunately for us, she has conceived a bitter prejudice against 'city girls' of all sorts."

"And the long and short of it is," said Miss Nettie, with a smile up in his face, "she doesn't consent to our marriage."

"Indeed, she doesn't? Of course it won't make any difference, but I'm sorry for your sake, Nettie, dear."

"And I'm sorry for your sake," said Nettie. "You have always been so much to your mother, I dislike to be the cause of any disagreement between you. But when we come to know each other, Harry, I will try to make her love me."

"She is determined not to know you, just now," said Harry, moodily.

"Let me see the letter, please?" asked Nettie.

Harry drew it from his pocket, and, somewhat reluctantly, gave it to her.

Nettie drew it from the envelope, opened it, and read from the stiff, old-fashioned hand:

"My DEAR SON:

"No, I will not come up to your wedding, neither do I desire you to bring your wife here. If you had come home and chosen from the good, industrious girls here, I would have done all I could for her and for you. But I know what the city girls are worth. Even if your wife did stay in a store, I've seen the fine, beribboned and befringed ladies behind the counter, putting on airs, and I'll have none of 'em! I think you will find to your cost that selling ribbons and laces don't learn a girl to make bread and pies or keep a decent house. However, I suppose you are old enough to make your own choice, only don't look to me for help. And when you find your pretty bargain has turned worthless on your hands, don't bring her home to me to wait on, for I'll have none of her fine flounces trailing over my floors. You, alone, will be always welcome, but I have no wish for any acquaintance with your fine-dressed wife."

"This is all at present, from your mother," "ELIZABETH MARKHAM."

"Pretty decided," said Nettie, as, half laughing, half crying, she returned the letter to Harry. "I'm very sorry, Harry, but if you think I can make up to you for your mother—" laying her face lightly upon his shoulder.

"I think you can make up for all the world, and I know it!" cried Harry, folding her closely in his arms.

"I'll try to," whispered Nettie. And then she added, more confidently, "And some time, Harry, we shall make friends with your mother. I feel sure of it."

"I hope so, Nettie. But this is a great disappointment just now. I had planned such a pleasant visit home, to the dear old Bucks county farm, for our wedding-trip."

"I would like very much to go there. But as we can't, suppose we stay here in Philadelphia, and not go anywhere, Harry?"

"What! will you give up your wedding-trip?"

"Yes, willingly. Indeed, Harry, I think I should prefer it. We have both of us been to Niagara, and most of the watering-places; and besides, it is too late for them. I have no friends we care to visit, and I think we might as well just settle down and begin life at once. You know I have saved enough from my own salary to furnish a house. Let us rent a little house and go right to housekeeping, like sensible people."

"Just what I would rather do, darling!" cried Harry, giving her a delighted kiss. "But I thought a wedding-trip was as indispensable to feminine human nature as a wedding-ring."

"Then learn your mistake," said Nettie, smiling. "You know, Harry, I've been in a boarding-house, without a home, ever since papa died, and I had to earn my own living, and I am as impatient as a child to have a house of my own to manage."

"Then you shall have one, as soon as it can be found!" cried the young man, feeling much happier than he had felt since reading his mother's letter.

In due time Harry and Nettie were quietly married, and speedily installed in a small but

neat and cozy house on Vine street, and began to get things arranged according to their liking.

Nettie Gale was the only child of wealthy parents, and for two or three years previous to her father's failure and death she had been the mistress of his household.

This had given her some experience, and she naturally possessed a good share of domestic talent, so that their little establishment was well conducted. One stout German girl was hired to do the rougher work, and the rest Nettie took upon herself.

The money she had saved furnished the house simply and prettily, and Harry added a few pretty articles as presents to her.

From the wreck of her father's fortune she had kept back two or three choice pictures and her piano. Not having room for these at her boarding-house, they had been stored away in packing-boxes in a furniture house.

They were now brought forth; Nettie's piano was newly tuned and pronounced good as ever, when it filled their neat parlor with silvery sounds, under the magic of her fingers.

So, very happily, sped the first two years of their wedded life. Only two clouds dimmed their sky. One, the lightest of these, was Mrs. Markham senior's continued displeasure and estrangement. Very soon after their marriage Harry inclosed their wedding-cards in a warm, hearty letter, earnestly inviting his mother to visit them.

To this letter no answer was ever returned, and beyond now and then sending her a city paper, Harry attempted no further communication with his mother.

A heavier sorrow than this was the loss of the little babe which opened its eyes for two short months, during the second year of their marriage, and then flew away to heaven.

But they had each other left, and so they bore up bravely and cheerfully.

Meantime, on her fine old farm down in Bucks county, old Mother Markham lived alone, except for her serving-maids and men, and mourned for her boy.

Now and then, through city friends, she heard of them, but they wrote to her directly no more. When the news of the birth and death of their babe, her first grandson, reached her, the proud old lady's heart yearned to go to them, but she would not.

"I dare say it was that flimsy city girl's ignorance and mismanagement caused its death," she said, thus hardening her heart.

So another winter found her still alone in the fine old Markham homestead. The winter set in severe and bitter, with a financial pressure which involved very many in ruin. Mother Markham, with abundant means at her command, wondered how it was with her boy and his wife.

One day, dining at a neighbor's, she heard startling news. The house where Harry had been so long had failed, even to complete ruin, and he was thrown out of work or means of support. And very soon after, while searching for employment, he met with a severe fall in the icy street, and was taken home with a broken leg. The gentleman who told her did not know how they were getting along since then, but as everybody in Philadelphia felt the hard times more or less, no doubt they had some hard pinches to go through.

Mother Markham carried home a very heavy heart, and lay long awake that night. Her boy, her only boy, was sick, suffering, maybe in want, with nobody to care for him but a "flimsy city girl."

That thought was the weightiest one—had she fancied him in good hands, she would still have held out.

"Maybe she will let him die, as she did the poor baby," groaned the proud old woman, as she tossed restlessly on her bed. And by morning she had given up the contest, and resolved to go to her boy.

With a vague idea that she should find Harry destitute of the common necessities of life, her first thought was to take a box of groceries and bedclothing, but sober second thought advised her to go first and see, and if such things were needed money would procure them in Philadelphia.

Accordingly she only supplied herself amply with that, and carefully putting in her purse the address, street and number, which Harry's last letter had given her, she was ready.

"Perhaps they don't live there now," said she, "but maybe I can find out where they do live, anyhow."

Leaving minute instructions to her trusty servants, she took the first train in the morning, and was in Philadelphia by eleven o'clock.

She had traveled quite enough to have her wits about her, and not to be disturbed by the noise and bustle of the city depot and the streets.

Taking a carriage she directed the driver to the street and number in Harry's address, which was a modest-looking little brick house, with the inevitable white window-blinds in which Philadelphia delights.

Bidding the driver wait until she was sure it was the right place, she ascended the steps and rung the bell.

A trim little figure, in a neat calico dress and gingham bib-apron, opened the door.

"Is this where Harry Markham lives?" she asked.

"Yes," replied the lady inside, pleasantly. "Are you his wife?" questioned the mother.

"I am," and as the lady caught sight of the carriage and the little trunk strapped upon it, her manner became agitated, and she added, eagerly: "I am his wife, and I feel sure you are his mother."

"Yes, I am. Let me pay the driver, and I'll come in," said the old lady, curtly.

Accordingly the driver was paid, the little trunk deposited in the hall, and the two Mrs. Markhams were inside, and the door shut.

Nettie would gladly have given her mother-in-law a hearty welcome, but the old lady's exterior, albeit this was not the person she expected to find in her son's wife, was too forbidding; so she only said:

"I am so glad you have come! It will do Harry so much good."

"I heard of his accident. How is he?" asked the elder lady.

"Better, much better. Getting well nicely now, but I don't want to excite him too suddenly. Will you wait in the parlor one moment while I prepare him to see you?" And Nettie threw open the parlor door.

Old Mrs. Markham cast a curious glance around after she was left alone.

"Humph!" was her comment. "Looks pretty tidy. Servants' work, I reckon. A piano! Open, too, and scattered with music! Wonder who takes care of the sick husband while she plays on it?"

But before she could comment further, Nettie came back, and led the way to a neat room up-stairs, where mother and son greeted each other as heartily as if no long estrangement had existed.

To Mrs. Markham's surprise, he was dressed and sitting in his large easy-chair, with a cane beside him.

He could walk about a little now, but he had had a pretty tough tug of it for three or four months.

"Nettie is a famous nurse, or I shouldn't be up now," he said, with a smile at his wife who had been putting away the old lady's things in another room. Just as she came in the door-bell rung.

"I shall have to leave you now—it is little Lizzie Wright, to take her lesson. But first, you must have a cup of tea, mother," pronouncing the last word a little hesitatingly, as if hardly knowing how it would be received.

But the elder lady only said: "No, no. Don't take the trouble to get me anything till dinner-time."

"Yes, I will," said Nettie; "since Harry's illness we have only been having two meals these short days, and it is a good while till dinner. I'll be back in a moment."

She went out and soon returned with a tray, neatly covered with a napkin, bearing a cup of fragrant tea, some fresh rolls and dainty slices of pink, boiled ham.

The old lady really began to feel hungry after her journey, so the odor was most appetizing, and she began her repast readily.

"These are excellent rolls for baker's rolls," she said, as she broke one.

"They are home-made," said Nettie.

"You must have a good cook, then," Nettie answered nothing, but Harry said: "We have, a first-rate cook."

"Now I must go down to Lizzie. She is waiting for her lesson. I will leave you and Harry to chat till I come back."

"What does she mean about lessons?" asked Mrs. Markham, after she was gone.

"Her music-lessons. Didn't you notice the piano down-stairs? It was Nettie's before we were married, and as soon as I got out of work, she hunted up eight or ten pupils, and went to giving lessons, to help along."

"Oh!" observed the mother. "You keep help, I suppose?"

"Not now. Nettie dismissed her girl as soon as I could sit up. She has nursed me, done all her own work, and given her lessons besides, for two months back."

Old Mrs. Markham began to feel very strange, but she would say nothing as yet, so they talked as easily as they could until Nettie came up.

"Now," she said, smiling brightly as she fixed the fire, "I don't have any more scholars to-day. I'm going down now to get dinner, and after that we can make ourselves cozy."

Mother Markham first thought to offer her help, but she concluded to wait a little longer. "I want to see how she does do," was her mental comment.

So she stayed with Harry, while Nettie went down to her work. It was not long till she came up again, and invited them down to dinner.

"Now, sir, your cane and my shoulder, and down we go!" she said, as she offered Harry both the supports she named.

It was slow work getting him down-stairs, but he was safely down at last, and Nettie led the way to the kitchen.

"I thought I would not make any changes," she said to mother Markham, "and since the cold weather we have been eating in here, to save the extra steps and fire in the dining-room."

Mother Markham gave a glance around the neat, spotless kitchen and over the table, with its snowy white cloth and napkins, shining glass and silver, and fragrant, nicely-cooked food, and then she turned around and taking Nettie in her motherly arms, gave her a hearty kiss.

"Nettie Markham, I'm an old fool and I'm well paid for my folly. Harry has got a better wife than he has a mother. Do you think you can forgive me, and learn to like me, for Harry's sake?"

"I'm sure I shall love you for your own sake, and I want you to like me, because I have no other mother," said Nettie, as she returned both the kiss and the embrace. Then Harry had to join the trio, and the dinner was nearly cold before anybody remembered what they came down for.

The very next day, at mother Markham's imperative command, Barbara, the German girl, was summoned back to the kitchen. But Nettie would not give up her scholars, until in the spring, when mother Markham returned home, and took both Harry and Nettie with her, for the whole summer.

And it would have been hard to tell which was dearest to her, Harry, Harry's wife, or the little blue-eyed granddaughter who came in the summer to be the pet and darling of all the three.

Love in a Maze:

OR,
THE DEBUTANTE'S DISENCHANTMENT.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET.

AUTHOR OF "ALIDA BARRETT, THE SEWING-GIRL," "MADELINE'S MARRIAGE," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

TWO WEDDINGS IN FASHIONABLE LIFE.

THE fashionable circles were surprised by the announcement of two matrimonial engagements.

One was that of Miss Emily Blount to Herbert St. Clare, the lion of society under his musical name of the "Count del Raggio."

Emily had never been a belle, but something of her early romance was remembered, and how she had parted with her lover because he was poor, and so fond of music she feared he would never seek the gifts of fortune. His wonderful success abroad, his acquisition of an independence while he cultivated to the utmost the genius with which he was endowed, were certainly strange, and contrary to the experience of most young men.

They did not take into view his patient and persevering application, his unwearied pursuit of the knowledge he coveted; his diligent industry, and his strict economy of time. These, with the inborn endowment of genius, had enabled him to triumph over obstacles that would have been insurmountable to those less highly gifted. And he possessed more than the acquirements of art and science; the pure and noble soul which, while it apprehends the beautiful, can appreciate and feel the good.

That the happiness of the tried and faithful pair was without a drawback, could be seen by all who knew them. A united life of contentment and usefulness was before them.

The other engagement was that of Ruhama Seaforth, the banker's daughter, with General Marsh.

This announcement caused a wide-spread sensation. The young lady was a courted beauty, with scores of worshippers eager for a sign of preference from her. She had worn the crown of bellehood not meekly; and caused

heartache to many of her suitors. She had never really favored one. That her choice should be made so suddenly, and the selection be one so much older than herself, and one so grave, so dignified, so opposite to her in all personal qualities, astonished all her acquaintances.

Ruhama gave no sign of the struggle she had undergone in the night and day succeeding her last interview with her father. Once fully satisfied that the disclosure of his financial affairs he had made was strictly true, that utter ruin was impending and that there was but one way to avert it, she decided on taking that way.

The prospect of poverty, privation, and loss of social position, she could not endure for a moment. The picture fancy conjured up of herself walking in plain attire, and meeting the friends she was accustomed to salute from her carriage, arrayed in splendor, to find herself treated coldly on every side, seemed to her worse than death. She could not bear the idea of such a reverse as Olive Weston had undergone; had borne with uncomplaining fortitude. Ruhama had often told herself she should die, if overtaken by such calamity.

She told her father, next morning, that she was ready to accede to his wishes, and would receive the General that evening as her accepted lover.

The banker kissed her deathly-pale cheek, and thanked and praised her for the most generous and loving daughter in the world. But she disclaimed such laudation. She shrunk from her own share of the ruin that threatened them, more than her father's. She could not bear the scorn, the exultation of the many with whom she had trifled.

"If I had not been such a flirt," she confessed, "if there were not so many to rejoice in my downfall, I might welcome poverty rather than part with my liberty. But I could not brook even the contempt I know I have deserved."

The favored suitor came, and the banker welcomed him as his daughter's affianced husband. The General behaved nobly. He believed the girl's consent freely given, for he would not have accepted the hand of a princess reluctantly bestowed.

Ruhama perceived this, and smiled brightly amidst her blushes, when she placed her hand in his. Even her father was deceived. She was heartwhole; it could not be possible but that she would soon love the gallant old soldier with all her heart.

The girl had begged her father not to invite her newly betrothed to remain to dinner. She wanted the evening to herself. But she did not spare her most becoming dress. Arrayed like a queen, she paced the brilliant drawing-room, weaving plans, and calling up visions of coming splendor that went far toward reconciling her to the strange turn affairs had taken.

Presently the door was thrown open, and the footman announced Mr. Wyatt.

Tom had not heard of Ruhama's engagement, of course. He greeted her with his usual chivalrous gallantry.

After some conversation, he said what he came to say, that he was on the eve of departure from the city; from the country, in fact, and had called to bid adieu.

"So sudden a departure! And where are you going, Mr. Wyatt?"

"To San Francisco."

He went on to tell her how promising an opportunity to make money had unexpectedly been opened to him by a friend at the head of a mercantile house there. To him, the making of a fortune involved a prospect of happiness to which he had never dared aspire while conscious that he had only a bare competence to offer.

His glowing looks, his glances of tender meaning, declared how much he was interested in some object dear to his heart. Ruhama honestly believed him devoted to a young lady of her acquaintance—Winifred Cameron.

"I have long imagined, or suspected, Mr. Wyatt, that you had placed your affections—when you hesitated to declare them," she remarked with a boldness inspired by the recent change in her own situation.

Tom looked unaffectedly astonished. A deep flush rose to the roots of his sunny brown curls.

"You have believed this, Miss Seaforth?" he stammered.

"Certainly."

"You have read my heart truly. I have loved—I do love—yet dare not reveal it."

"Not to her who has inspired the feeling?"

"To her least of all," replied the young man, more and more surprised.

"Not if her happiness depends on the avowal?" asked Ruhama, archly.

"Her happiness?" faltered poor Tom.

The girl laid her small white hand on his arm.

"Why should you maintain a silence equally cruel to both?"

Wyatt caught his breath convulsively. His color went and came like a maiden's blushes. Ruhama went on:

"I am sure your suit will be successful with the fair Winnie."

"Winnie!" exclaimed Wyatt, bewildered.

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Of Miss Cameron, assuredly. You love her—I have long been convinced of it; and she—"

"Spare me, Miss Seaforth! You are utterly mistaken."

"Mistaken?"

"I have been in a dream! I am justly humbled for daring to indulge for an instant such an illusion."

"Tom, Mr. Wyatt, why not give me your confidence?" cried the girl, impressively.

"You will despise me!"

"How can I do that?"

"You will—Ruhama—when I tell you I have dared to love—you! Forgive me! I will never again offend you."

Ruhama turned away, in emotion she strove to repress.

"Tom—" she faltered—"you have not offended me."

"You voice trembles! Ruhama! Can it be—?" and the lover took her hand, and lifted it to his lips.

"Not a word more!" cried the girl, struggling to subdue her feeling, and drawing her hand away.

After a pause she spoke again:

"I will not spare myself—I deserve this. I am a coquette, but not utterly heartless."

"Will you listen to me, dearest girl? May I go forth to labor in the hope of being one day worthy the priceless treasure of your affection?"

"Tom, I cannot deceive you. Of all who have sought my favor, I like you best; but I thought you devoted, heart and soul, to Winifred Cameron."

The young man's face was irradiated.

He tried to capture her hand again; he murmured protestations of ardent passion.

"You must not talk so; you must never

speak in this way again!" Ruhama cried, dashing tears from her eyes; "Tom, I am engaged to marry another man!"

The announcement was like a thunderbolt to the startled lover.

Ruhama gave a sketch of what had happened to bring about her betrothal, without mention of the necessity of securing the General's fortune.

"But all this is shocking!" exclaimed young Wyatt. "Just now you said—I can never forget it—that you favored me."

"So I did—so I do—Tom—but that must end it. I have given my promise to papa; I will not go back."

"Ruhama, I shall gain a fortune in a few years; perhaps in a short time. Will you be forced to marry a man of unsuitable age, loving another at the same time?"

"I did not say I loved you, Tom," said the girl, coquettishly.

"You said you liked me best of all your admirers."

"That is very different, you know, from loving with all one's heart."

"Oh, Ruhama, I would make you love me! You could not resist such love as mine!"

"I think myself incapable of love. The best I could rally would be a mere liking."

"Let me keep that till I cherish it into love! Free yourself from other ties, and wait one year for me!"

"Impossible; I have pledged my word!"

The pleadings and protestations of her lover could not drive her from this point.

Tom Wyatt was in despair. He had been something of a male flirt, but his fancy had finally settled on this vivacious coquette, whom he had hoped to bring to terms when he should have won his fortune. His pride had forbidden advances while she was rich and he poor.

Now the blight of disappointment overspread all his plans.

The girl could not really love him—he saw that; but the simple preference of one so hard to win was enough to concede, had the field been open for him in the future.

But a marriage with another—that shut the door, and sent him away in despair.

They were interrupted by the banker. He had not liked to leave his daughter alone with a probable suitor so long, and was anxious to have her engagement known.

Ruhama told him of Wyatt's intended departure and flattering prospects. The banker congratulated him with a cleared brow.

"When you return you may find changes among us," he said, with a glance at his daughter. She answered with a look that savored of defiance.

"I have told the news to Mr. Wyatt, papa," she observed, quietly. "He is an old friend."

"And the first to know what will make all our old friends pleased with your prospects of happiness," replied the banker.

Young Wyatt answered steadily, and in about half an hour made his adieu for a long absence.

The two weddings did not come off together. Miss Seaforth's

Emily could see that her brother was more anxious than he would admit. She tried to make light of his uneasiness, and was sure the wayward girl would be at home by this time. "Unless some one has invited her to go to the opera," she added, laughing. "She is so music-mad, you know."

"That would be a freak on her part I should resent," said her brother. "Well, I will go to Mrs. Weston's."

"Stay to dinner. You will have time after that. Herbert will go with you."

No; he would not stay. The cloud on his face pained his sister.

"It is downright ungrateful in the girl," she exclaimed, "to behave in this way, after all you have done for her! Is the suit come on about her property?"

"It has been postponed."

"What chance is there of success?"

"Very little, if we cannot prove her birth to be what we want."

"And in case of failure, she will be left dependent on your bounty altogether?"

"Don't speak in that way, Emily. The girl has talents, and well cultivated, they will give her a maintenance."

"But she will owe all to you. I have no patience with her for not being aware of her obligations to you."

"I think she is too painfully aware of what you call her obligations."

"What do you mean?"

"She is proud, and conscious of possessing talent. It distresses her to feel that she is dependent."

"What folly!"

"I have seen it ever since she discovered the probability of her loss of property."

"You told her of it?"

"No, indeed; she was in the library the day you and I spoke on the subject, and she heard every word."

"Well, it was right she should know."

"I have seen her chafing like a caged wild doe ever since. She has a fancy that she could earn a living for herself."

"Poor little thing! She could do nothing."

"Her inexperience makes the future appear all *couldeu de rose*."

"I don't see what can be done, Wyndham. Of course coercion is out of the question?"

"Of course."

"And you could not marry such a girl?"

Wyndham's pale cheek flushed a little.

"The doubt thrown on her birth would be a bar to her marriage into any respectable family."

"She is too young to think of marriage. How strangely you talk! as if marriage were the only end and aim of a woman!"

"So it is, usually; and in my opinion nothing else will tame your wild bird. Find her an indulgent husband, who is not particular as to antecedents, and has no family to be injured by the carplings of the curious."

The lawyer uttered an exclamation of impatience, and rose to go.

His visit to Mrs. Weston's was fruitless.

But on his arrival at home, where he fully expected to find the girl, for it was now late in the evening, his mother handed him a letter, which had been brought to the door by a small boy, who did not wait.

The letter was from Elodie. She wrote to thank her guardian for his care of her; but announced her determination to enter at once on her life of self-dependence. She was staying with a lady who had been her mother's friend, and who favored her views. She had left Mr. Blount's house that morning, never to return.

CHAPTER XV.

THE YOUNG DEBUTANTE.

FOR many days had Elodie's resolution to take the step been maturing in her mind. She knew that her guardian would not consent to her casting off his protection. If she remained under his authority, to what must she look forward? To years of tutelage and submission; to humiliating dependence, to a consciousness of impotence that harassed her impetuous spirit. Her chains must be broken at one bound, or she must wear them till they fretted and galled her to death.

She had not failed to notice the change that came over Emily at her marriage. She had not invited the young girl to be a visitor at her house.

The reason was plain to Elodie; she was regarded as one unfit to move in the same social circle. Her want of fortune, and the question soon to be raised in a court touching her legitimacy, placed her beneath the notice of the proud women of fashion she had been accustomed to see for the past few months. Yet how superior to them she felt herself!

The kindness of Mrs. Blount, the brotherly tenderness of Wyndham, were not enough to soothe her pride under this slight.

She had vague hopes of making herself a name and fame that would compel their respect and attention, or else of being separated from them so far that their sneers would be unheeded.

Having fixed on the day of her leaving her home, the girl packed a large sachel with two or three changes of dress, and put the rest into a trunk which she could send for.

She counted her little store of money; it was not large, but sufficient for her probable wants for some time to come.

She had already decided where she would go. She knew the importance of keeping herself free from the chance of being called an adventuress.

Her aunt Letty had several times taken her to see Mrs. Brill, a worthy woman who lived some way about Eighth avenue and Thirty-fourth street, and had a house large enough to accommodate a few lodgers; eking out her income by doing a little dressmaking and millinery, to which a room on her second floor was devoted.

Mrs. Brill had petted Elodie when a child; had praised her beauty and sprightliness, and had more than once expressed a wish to adopt her.

On the last visit Mrs. Rashleigh had made her with the girl, after remarking her striking resemblance to her mother, the dame had predicted some great fortune, by marriage or otherwise, for her, and had bade her, if she should at any time need a friend, to come to her.

To this partial friend Elodie had written a long letter, confiding all her troubles, and her determination to win her own way in the world. No time was given for a reply; for Elodie would not risk the possibility of a denial.

The very same day on which her letter was received, a cab drove to the door of the brick house, and the girl alighted from it, paying and dismissing the driver before she came in at the little gate.

Mrs. Brill came to meet her in the hall, and took her up to her sewing-room.

"How the child has grown!" was her first exclamation; and she could not help remarking the elegance of the slender, symmetrical figure, set off by the very handsome dress of

fine cashmere, so stylishly trimmed, and the velvet hat to match, with its brown feather and ribbon, and the clustering rosebuds on the left side.

The girl's flossy curls, in rich abundance, rushed out from the confinement of the hat, framing a lovely blooming face, that could not have failed to fascinate the gaze of strangers had it not been protected by a thick baroque veil.

Mrs. Brill was very glad to see her, and assured her she was welcome to make her house a home. She had felt hurt, indeed, that Mr. Rashleigh—her uncle—had not sent her there upon her aunt's death.

"You should have come to me at once, and I said so," she cried, when she had embraced the girl, removed her wrappings, and shown her to a small room next her own. "I should have been a mother to you, and I will be poor darling! And so your uncle is going to take away your property, like a brute as he is?"

"He has claimed it for his son," replied the girl. "The trial is to come on soon, I believe. You know, without money to pay my board, I should have been a burden to the family of Mr. Blount."

"And you did just right to come here, my child."

"I have not money to pay my board here, Mrs. Brill; but I can help you in sewing, in the time when I have no lessons to take."

"Indeed, you shall do nothing but study and practice your music; and when you make money by that, you can pay me!"

"Oh, thank you, dear Mrs. Brill! I am going to study for the stage, you know."

"Quite right! I always said you would do something great."

"And I can play and sing so well now, I am going to try for a situation to sing in choruses; and that will secure me a salary."

An exclamation of wonder and pleasure burst from the well-meaning but hardly judicious dame.

"I am going to apply for it directly. And I hope my guardian will not find me out. If he does, I will refuse to go home with him."

"You shall stay with me, if you like it better, child. Has Mr. Blount legal papers giving him authority over you?"

"Oh, no; only aunt Letty asked him to take care of me, just before she died."

"She ought to have sent for me."

"Mr. Wyndham happened to be there, and—and he saved my life, when I was out on the rocks; and he was very kind—oh, so kind! I hope he will forgive me for leaving him in this way! Oh, auntie Brill!"—she had called the dame thus when she was a child—"how can I send a letter to him? He will be searching for me, if I do not write, and tell him I have a safe home!"

"Will you tell him you are here?"

"No; I will keep that a secret; I do not want him to come after me, nor to visit me. He does not want me to sing in public. Auntie, I will write the letter now; will you send it?"

"Yes; Anthony shall take it for you."

The letter was written and dispatched.

Then Mrs. Brill took her young friend into a room on the third floor, where there was a fine piano, used by a young Italian musician who was lodging with her.

He was connected with a traveling troupe, and gave concerts in different parts of the country. This room was retained by him in his absences, and the piano was his own.

Elodie opened the instrument, and sat down to play. Mrs. Brill was amazed at her performance. To her uneducated taste, the girl seemed the superior of any professor she had ever heard.

When Elodie, after playing the piece, struck into a soft prelude, and sung, sending out rich volumes of melody from a voice of unusual power, and well trained, too, the worthy dame clasped her hands and listened breathlessly.

There was another listener: the young Italian, who had come up stairs, and stood outside the door of his own room, keeping time to the music, nodding his head, and expressing real pleasure in the song. It was a simple English ballad, but gave scope for the exercise of voices in varied intonations.

"Bravo! bravissimo!" the young man cried, when the song was ended, clapping his hands.

"La signorina a brava cantante!"

Elodie hurried out of the room, clinging to Mrs. Brill's arm, and blushing at being caught.

The dame made suitable apologies, which were met by an earnest entreaty that "la signorina" would use the piano as much as she pleased. The young man would time it himself for her use, and would not be in his room except at certain hours, etc.

That evening, while the young artist was absent, performing his professional duties, Elodie sang and practiced her most difficult pieces. The instrument was of unusual excellence; and the owner was often out of the city for days and weeks together.

Mrs. Brill would not permit her young protégée to assist her in the household work, but insisted on her assiduous cultivation of her music. Apart from her pride in the girl's talents, she knew that she would be sure to profit by her success.

So time passed, during which Wyndham Blount made all the search possible, without calling in the aid of the police, to discover his missing ward.

He even went to inquire of Rashleigh, who would be likely to know any friends she might have. Rashleigh extracted from him all the information he could get, but gave none in return. The discovery of Elodie's musical gifts put a new idea into his head, by which he resolved to profit.

Mortified, despondent, and vexed at Elodie's ingratitude for his protection and services, young Blount at last desisted from his search.

He waited patiently for the time which he knew would come, when the rash girl would enter on a professional career.

He had sought interviews with the managers of the opera, and of other musical companies, and had received their promise not to engage her without sending him notice.

Emily St. Clare was severe on the girl's escapade. It showed her blood and breeding, she thought; she would never have been satisfied to live in retirement, and would sooner or later have brought her protectors into trouble on her account.

She said little, however, to her brother, for she saw that he felt deeply chagrined.

It was her opinion that the girl had gone to some of her mother's or aunt's former associates, and had been taken by them out of the city, that they might elsewhere make merchandise of her acquisitions.

Her conjecture was the most rational and nearest the fact. The young Italian had procured for Elodie an offer to take a tour with the troupe in which he was engaged, and to sing in their concerts, a subordinate part. The leading lady, Madame Leona—English, in spite of her Italian name—would take charge

of her. She was to appear as "Mademoiselle Helene."

Mrs. Brill accepted the proposal, and Elodie was wild with joy. Her wardrobe was soon prepared; for she needed but two concert dresses, and one for traveling, with a household morning dress.

The troupe traveled through the smaller towns on the Hudson and thence through parts of New England; and everywhere the fresh, rich voice of Elodie, with her remarkable beauty, rendered her a favorite.

Madame Leona was a benevolent matron, free from jealousy of a rival; and she took infinite pains to improve her charge.

The girl, in fact, made such rapid progress as to impress all who knew her with the certainty that she would rise to eminence in her profession.

One evening a concert was given in New Haven. Elodie was to sing a difficult solo. She had studied it under the direction of her lady friend, and was perfect, as Leona decided.

The girl felt that she was approaching the crisis of her life; but experienced no timorous shrinking nor distrust of her own powers. These were to be tested as they had never been before.

She put on her best dress, a white corded silk, shot with pale rose-color. The low corsage and short sleeves displayed the girl's beautiful neck and arms, shaded by delicate illusion lace. She wore no ornament except a pearl brooch and bracelets—some of her mother's jewelry. Her abundant waving hair was unadorned; its curls confined at the back of the head by a simple ribbon. In all her life the girl had never looked more radiantly lovely.

When she appeared on the platform the burst of applause that greeted her was due more to her beauty than to any recognized professional excellence. It was delightful to her, and she bowed repeatedly in acknowledgment.

She did notice that she was furtively and closely watched by a man near the entrance, on one of the side benches, who sought to avoid observation as much as possible.

It was an evening of triumph to the young debutante. She felt that her position was now secure. Madame Leona congratulated her; praised her diligence and improvement; and advised her on the termination of the present engagement to demand a doubled salary.

Proud indeed was the girl that she had achieved this success. She threw her arms round her friend's neck, called her her guardian angel, and declared that all was owing to her instruction.

They had a joyous supper that night together, in Leona's parlor. But Elodie cared not to eat.

"When you are of my age," cried the good lady, "you will find a dish of oysters and a bottle of champagne a neat finale to an evening's triumph! Eat, my child, or you will lose your roses, and then what will Enrico say?"

"What should he have to do with them?" queried the girl.

"You need not look so innocent!" retorted the prima donna, laughing. "Are you not to marry Enrico, and go starring together?"

"Marry Enrico!" exclaimed Elodie, her rosy lip curling in scorn. "Who ever dreamed of such a thing?"

"He has, I'll warrant me! He got you this engagement. I was consulted by the manager about it."

"He was very kind. I was a stranger to him, and he was very good to take an interest in my future."

"Pooh, pooh, child! Men do not take interest in young girls without hope of reward. Enrico is deeply in love with you."

"No, indeed!"

"Indeed he is! All the artists have noticed it. And you have not discouraged his attentions."

The girl remembered, with a shiver of dismay, how often the young man—the owner of the piano at Mrs. Brill's—had escorted her to and from the concert-room, and had placed her in the carriage. She had been grateful for his kindness, but had never dreamed of such a motive for it.

With not a little disdain, she now repelled the idea.

"My dear child," persisted the prima donna, "you understand Enrico. He is an excellent tenor, and a careful and correct musician. You have benefited by some of his instructions. He would be the best companion for you in a provincial tour; his voice suits with yours; you could not do better."

"Madame!" cried the girl, passionately, and starting up, "if you talk this way, if any one does, I will leave the company at once, and go back to auntie Brill!"

"Cospetto! but you have made a contract to finish our tour."

"I shall break it, if I am to be thrust upon a stranger in this fashion! Signor Enrico is nothing to me! I will receive no more attentions from him!"

"Ebenel! do not be violent about it; no one shall coerce you, child!"

"They had better not try it!" exclaimed Elodie, weeping and sobbing now, and crimson with excitement. "I am not to be coerced into anything, much less a marriage! I did not run away from home for that!"

Strangely enough, since her flight from Mrs. Blount's house, she had often spoken of it as "home."

"So, you ran away!" repeated her protectress. "I have heard as much. I can believe it, too, for your wild nature. Your parents would not have let you go into the profession!"

"I have no parents. I have not a relation in the world; and no one has authority over me. I had a right to run away. I am not a school-girl!" cried the debutante.

"From whom did you run, then?"

"I was living with my guardian; that is, with his mother."

"But he had authority over you. You are not of age!"

"I am almost seventeen. He had no authority; only my aunt, when she died, asked him to take care of me. Oh, he was so good!"

"You love him, perhaps; and that makes you cruel to Enrico!"

"Enrico be—hanged!" ejaculated the wayward girl. "I shall hate him, if you mention his name again!"

"Poor boy! I see there is no hope for him!" And the fair vocalist applied herself anew to her oysters and champagne.

Elodie had risen and stood by a small piano at the end of the room, her fingers straying over its keys to a soft, wild melody she had composed herself.

Recollections of her home with the Blounts were in her heart, and she was involuntarily contrasting it with her present life. The gentle refinement of all her associates there, the homelike atmosphere, breathing of affection, delicacy and benevolence, came to present themselves in contrast with the often rough, sordid and repulsive things she had been obliged to encounter of late. It was necessary for her

to call frequently upon her dignity and self-reliance. In the midst of her triumphs lurked some humiliations. Her sensitive nature felt these, and she knew them inseparable from such a career as she had chosen; at least, till she had reached the pinnacles of success.

The remembrance of Wyndham, too, was a solace to her amid sad thoughts. He was her ideal of manly excellence. She had not thought much of the trouble she was causing him; but she looked forward to the time when she could meet him justified by the stamp of success; when she was earning an independence, and in possession of the honors of the celebrity she coveted.

"He will see, then, that I could not stay and be a school-girl; that I did right to earn my own maintenance," she thought. The recollection of his sister always awakened resentful feelings.

"Helene," said Madame Leona—she always called the girl by her professional name—"you want to sing in the grand opera?"

"Oh, so much!" cried Elodie, clasping her hands.

"Right! I wish it, too. We might join Maretzky's traveling troupe first. This concert singing does not suit either of us. We must see about it when we return."

"Oh, madame! How charming that would be!"

The girl threw herself on an ottoman at the feet of her friend, clasped her hands across her lap, and looked up eagerly in her face.

"Ebenel! you must practice the action; it is different, you know, from concert parts. They call it 'business' on the stage. You are graceful, and would learn the poses easily; I will give you some lessons."

Another exclamation of delight, and the girl snatched Leona's hand and kissed it.

"But we need influence; we need an agent. Would the guardian you told me of, Helene—would he negotiate for you?"

"You might ask him. You must have some one to negotiate."

"I cannot ask him."

"Why not? You are independent of him."

"I do not know what hold he may have over me. He might compel me to go back."

"Very true. But if you are in danger of being reclaimed, the more reason you should have some one to make the terms and introduce you, and manage things."

"I have only auntie Brill," said the girl, musingly.

"She can do nothing. We must think. We will talk it all over to-morrow. Now it is too late. Good-night."

It was long before Elodie could close her eyes. Exultant hope and perplexed thinking banished slumber.

It was nearly noon next day when she was called up by the maid, who brought a tray of breakfast to her bedside, with the information that a gentleman had called, and finding she was not visible, had gone away, saying he would return at one o'clock.

Elodie started up.

"Who was the gentleman?" she demanded, in no little trepidation.

"He left no name. He said he would call again."

Could it be her guardian? She trembled at the very thought.

"What kind of a looking man? Young? tall? A handsome man?"

"Not young, nor handsome, Miss. A dark man, middle-aged; bushy hair, a harsh voice."

No, it could not have been Wyndham. Perhaps some musician, who had proposals for a concert, or wanted to get her to sing for a charity. She had had such applications. Her excitement was quieted at once.

She performed her ablutions hastily, and threw on a dressing-gown; then ate her breakfast with the hearty appetite of youth and health. Then she sent a message to Madame Leona. She must have her presence in receiving a visit from a stranger.

Leona readily obeyed the summons. She liked the girl's confidence, and was well pleased that she should form no plans, nor accept any propositions, without her sanction. She helped Elodie to put on her morning dress.

The maid came up a second time with word that the gentleman was in the hotel parlor.

"Send for him to your parlor, madame," entreated the girl.

The message was sent, and the two ladies entered the private reception-room.

In three minutes after they had seated themselves the door was opened by the servant to admit the stranger.

Elodie rose, and advanced a step or two, then suddenly recoiled, with a faint cry of surprise and dismay.

The gentleman was Bennet Rashleigh.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 281.)

Tiger Dick!

OR, THE CASHIER'S CRIME.

A TALE OF MAN'S HATE AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE.

CHAPTER VII.

WHO WILL GET HER?

THE fiendish plot of Cecil Beaumont had been carried into execution. In the fisherman, who while accredited with but little wit, was really possessed of no small degree of cunning, Shadow Jim found a witness, who, under his tuition, soon had a very plausible story, true in every particular save the one of his having seen the events he described. The roustabout, being that morning thrown out of employment, was nothing loath to fortify himself at Tiger Dick's bar, and then "finger the rhino," as he expressed it, meaning receive pay, for simply following the bent of his nature and engaging in an exploit in which he would have been a volunteer in any event.

But an unforeseen contingency had arisen. Fred Powell had been delivered out of the murderous hands of Judge Lynch.

It was not until the next day that Shadow Jim could communicate with Tiger Dick. He left Cecil's letter with Jimmy Duff; and upon his release from jail and the receipt of the letter, Dick sent for his allies.

"Look-a-here, sports," said Dick, "somehow or other this strikes me as a pretty sharp game. If our gay young cavalier don't make a clean sweep, he'll fetch up in Tophet—that's my opinion. What do you think about it?"

"I guess we all foller suit, pard," said Shadow Jim. "But as near as I can make out, we've got to make one more try. It won't do to let our bird go with only a few tail feathers plucked out."

"That's so," assents the Tiger, meditatively. "We've got to sink him, or knock under ourselves," pursued Shadow Jim. "If they see the horns of the gentle cashier sticking out of this last dodge, it'll make 'em kinder shaky on the other hands that he's played."

"That ain't no lie, Shady," said the Tiger. "If they get to thinking that maybe the cashier has stocked the cards, they'll want something more than his say-so on the forgery business. The whole thing'll go to smash if they begin to doubt the cashier while young Powell is alive."

"Knowin

acter, a wild recklessness came into his look and air that had not appeared before.

"I say, pard," pursued the Tiger, breaking in upon his thoughts, "that black-eyed angel's a clipper; by Jove, she is! Pate never meant her to be thrown away on such a bloke as Powell. No, sir! I'll take a man of genius to be a fit mate for her. What do you think of your humble servant, Tiger Dick, alias King Monte, of Yellow-sand Gulch, and everywhere else in the diggings, California?"

He thrust his thumbs through the armholes of his vest, and leaning back, favored Cecil with a drunken leer.

A wild gleam of hatred and jealousy leaped into Cecil Beaumont's eyes; but he hid it beneath the drooping lids, and pushed the decenter toward the Tiger. Dick poured out some liquor, and said confidentially:

"The first day I got a squirt at her pretty face, I made up my mind that that flat shouldn't hold a hand in that game. She gave me her hand like a princess, and that was my first lesson in the grand passion. I've seen a good many pretty women, but I never was set afloat in Paradise before. But, that girl's going to run off with a soldier—see if she don't—and I'm that soldier!"

When the Tiger had taken his leave, Cecil ground his teeth in rage, and shook his fist in the direction of the mouth of the cave.

"Well see who gets her!" he said, with a look of iron determination.

Then he disguised himself, and leaving the cave, followed Tiger Dick to the city. Here he went to a cabman, whom he knew money would make blind, deaf and dumb. Of him he engaged a carriage, to be in readiness on the following night. Then he procured a saddle horse; and when he returned with him just before the break of dawn, the animal was reeking with sweat, showing that he had been ridden hard all night.

Cecil then wrote the note which Florence supposed to be from her lover, and secured its delivery by a broken-down theater actor.

"We'll see who gets her!" he muttered again, as he repaired to the cave.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN ABDUCTION.

When he entered the cave, Cecil Beaumont had before him one of the most trying days of his life; a day in which his breast was a prey to successive ecstasies of love, hate and anxiety. Everything being in readiness for the execution of his last and crowning plot, he had but to await the time, with his thoughts as his only companions.

"That is the way with them," he said, thinking of his relations with May; "they will lavish their affections upon some cuss like me, when they wouldn't give an honest man a second look. I pity her; for she loves me, as few can. But the rose out-blooms the dandelion, and the moon pales before the noonday sun. Oh, heavens! if she would come to me of her own free will! If she would lay her cheek to mine, and call me 'Cecil!'"

He clasped his hands over his face, and shook from head to foot at the thought.

"But no; she will hate me. She will curse me with her every breath. Be it so. I could not live and know that she was in the power of that fiend, Tiger Dick. Ah! how well he is named! But I will save her from him, if she makes every moment of my life a burning hell with her scorn."

Then his thoughts took another turn.

"Sixty thousand dollars!" he said. "She shall be a queen while it lasts, whatever may follow. I will lavish upon her all the money I can buy. Oh! that I could buy one moment of love! But no. Gilding her chains will only make them the more galling. Oh, Florence! how I love you! And yet I am going to bring upon your life such a blight as only a fiend could meditate!"

With such thoughts he passed the day, and at the approach of night, as indicated by his watch, he went into one of the galleries that ramified from the main cave, lighting his way with a pine knot. At its furthest extremity, he dug down into the sand that had been collected by the action of water, and drew forth the sachet in which Tiger Dick had placed the money taken from the bank. Then he returned to the main chamber and stole forth into the night.

A walk of an hour brought him to a road, where he took up a position behind a large oak. Within twenty minutes a carriage approached from the direction of the Mississippi, and as it neared the spot, the driver began to whistle a popular air, the slackened the pace of his horses. At this signal Cecil stepped boldly out into the road; the carriage stopped; he leaped in, and was whirled rapidly away.

It would be vain to attempt to describe the emotions of Cecil Beaumont, as he stood in the little bower at the side of the bride path leading from Griggs' Hollow, awaiting the coming of the woman he most deeply loved—the woman against whom he meditated an irreparable wrong. With clammy hands and fevered brow he stood shaking as with an ague. Then a light step came down the path. It sounded hurried; and he could imagine how wildly her heart was beating with hope and love and fear.

He took a step forward with a swimming, dizzy sensation—a wild ecstasy of exultation and love and fear. She saw him and sprang toward him with a tripping, tremulous cry:

"Fred! oh, Fred! how glad I am!"

He felt her arms about his neck. Their touch was like fire, and thrilled him to the heart. He clasped her in a frenzied embrace. He felt her breath on his cheek. All his soul went into his lips to receive that one kiss, glowing with the fervor of her mighty love. But in that moment a thrill of agonizing fear, a shiver of loathing and horror, shot through her frame; she gave a frantic wrench to free herself, and struck him full on the mouth with her hand. Caught like a bird in the toils of a serpent, her heart seemed to leap from her throat in one wild shriek of terror, and then she sunk limp and lifeless in his arms.

With hurried step Cecil carried her out to the road. The carriage drove up and a man leaped out. As if by previous understanding, he mounted Florence's horse and dashed away. Then Cecil entered the carriage, the driver whipped his horses, and they flew over the ground, bearing Florence Goldthorp from her home to an unknown fate.

It was hours before Florence Goldthorp awoke from that deathlike swoon, and then the first gray streaks of dawn were appearing in the east. At first she was only dimly conscious of the rocking motion of a carriage. Then she knew that some one was holding her hand and looking anxiously into her face.

"Thank God that you have recovered at last!" I feared that I had lost you," said a voice that sounded far away.

It sent a thrill through her frame, she struggled back into consciousness, and all the terrible reality burst upon her. With a cry of loathing and horror, she snatched away her hand and shrunk into the corner of the carriage.

Cecil Beaumont leaned back and covered his face with his hands.

With a sudden spring Florence clutched the handle of the door, intending to throw herself out. Cecil caught her and forced her gently, yet firmly back into her seat.

"You can but recognize the futility of any attempt to escape," he said. "I do not intend to harm you, but I must not be thwarted in my purpose. I shall resort to only such measures of restraint as are rendered necessary by your deportment."

She glanced out of the window. She saw only a desolate wilderness on every side.

"If you should scream, there is no one to hear you," he said, divining her thought.

"Who are you?" she asked, peering at him through the gloom; for there seemed something familiar in his voice.

For answer, he removed the false whiskers and glasses. Florence started violently, and then leaned forward in a close scrutiny.

"Mr. Beaumont!" she whispered, with superstitious terror in her voice.

"The same," and in the flesh," he replied, with a smile.

She passed her hand across her forehead in a dazed way. She could not believe the evidence of her senses. Yet there he sat before her, his form, his face, his voice.

"Mr. Beaumont!" she repeated to herself. "Alive!—can it be, alive?"

"Never more so," he replied, in an off-hand way.

"And you were not killed at Dead Man's Bluff? But they buried Cecil Beaumont!"

"That's when they fooled themselves. Did you never see two men much alike?"

"Then Frederick is not a murderer!" She trembled from head to foot with the idea. Cecil Beaumont only smiled.

"Why did you not appear and clear him from that dreadful charge?" she demanded suddenly.

"For reasons," was the laconic reply; but the gleam of hatred that convulsed his face told more than words could save.

A chilling terror took possession of her as she slowly evolved the truth in her mind, and she next demanded in a husky tone:

"Why have you stolen me from my home?"

"Because I love you," he replied.

"And what do you purpose to do with me?"

"Marry you!" he replied, in a thrilling tone, gazing at her with a strange mingling of pain with love and exultant anticipation.

She affected to laugh at him, but a shiver ran through her frame.

"Marry me?" she repeated; "and who will you get to perform such a ceremony? I have but to denounce your villainy, and be free from you."

"The minister whom I have employed will be deaf to your appeals."

"Do not fear," he went on, divining her thought, "but that he is a regularly-ordained clergyman; for I love you truly, and am determined to make you in reality my wife; but money is his only god."

"But I will never consent. I will make no responses. I will spurn you. Such a mummery will not have a shadow of legality about it."

"Oh, yes it will, if you subsequently acknowledge it."

"But I will never acknowledge it. I loath you; I abhor you; I will denounce you at the first opportunity. No, I would die a thousand deaths before I would acknowledge so loath some a bond."

"You may be glad to," was all he replied.

A shiver ran through her frame.

"What do you mean?" she asked in a scared voice.

He had restrained his emotions with an iron hand. Now they burst from his control.

"What do I mean?" he cried, with convulsed features. "Paradoxical as it may sound, I mean that I love you with a tenderness which shudders that harm should come to a hair of your head, and that loving you like this, I am about to blight your life and crush your heart with my own hand! I mean that my soul is being rent in twain by the conflict of all that is pure and holy in my love for you pleading for your restoration unharmed to your home and friends, and all that is ignoble and devilish in my love for you goading me to possess you at all hazards!"

The intensity of his passion was like a vivid gleam of lightning, revealing his dark nature to her in lines of fire. She saw the battling of those forces, as he described it. If she could only stimulate the good!

"Let the noble part of your nature prevail!" she pleaded, with clasped hands. "You say that you love me; and could you destroy me in the same breath?"

"Oh, God! how I love you!" he cried, with hands clasped over his face.

"You will not consummate this terrible wrong! You will return me to my home, and I will bless you with my dying breath!"

"I cannot! I cannot! Oh, heaven! I cannot give you up!"

"See! see!" she cried, her bosom fluttering between hope and despair; "you can take me back, and I will never betray you. Every one thinks you dead. You can go away and begin life anew—a nobler, better life. The consciousness of having resisted this temptation—this one victory of the good—will stimulate you to perseverance in uprightness. Do this noble action! You will never have cause to repent it. You will date your new life from to-day, and bless the inspiration that prevailed over you."

He wrung his hands in agony. He pleaded with her, in almost groveling supplication.

"Florence, listen! I have wealth. I will lavish upon you everything that heart can wish and money can buy. For the rest, I will love you as never before was woman loved. I will be your slave, and in return ask only a smile and the poor privilege of kissing your hand."

"Stop! stop!" she cried. "You know that such a dream can never be realized. The touch of your gold would be like fire. If I could accept it, I should deserve the terrible fate you depict. But you will not overwhelm me with shame and yourself with infamy. You will release me—say it!"

"Never! never! I will bind you to me, and heaven nor hell shall come between us!"

He sat erect, as he gave himself over to the devil in those words. A look of immovable resolve came into the steady glimmer of his eyes and settled about his white, set lips.

She threw herself upon her knees before him, and with clasped hands and eyes streaming tears made a last appeal.

"Wait! wait!" she cried. "Do not you see? You can only make me hate you—loath you—abhor the very sight of you! You can only crush me—make life to me a burden insupportable! If you love me, as you say you do, every moment of your life will be embittered by an agony of remorse and self-reproach, and you will end by nating yourself and me, as the helpless cause of your misery! See! you

need not return with me. You can get out and go to the new life that is before you, and the cabman will take me home; or you can set me down and I will find my way back alone. Spare me—spare yourself this lifelong wretchedness—"

He cut her short with a wild laugh of abandonment and recklessness.

"Wretchedness!" he repeated. "Oh, no! every moment at your side shall be one of bliss!"

And he snatched her to his breast with passionate exultation.

With a shriek of horror and loathing, terror and despair, she tore herself from his embrace, and shrunk cowering on the back seat of the carriage. Then with a sudden revulsion of feeling he covered his face with his hands and groaned:

"My God! what a devil I am!"

From that moment, Florence Goldthorp spoke not another word, but sat shivering in her corner; and any one looking at her cowering, terror-struck attitude and wild eyes might well have believed her a maniac.

Half an hour later, just as the sun was appearing above the horizon, the carriage was driven out of sight behind a deserted log-house that stood a little back from the road. Then Cecil, Florence and the driver went into the house, to await the fall of night before continuing their journey.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 271.)

Yellowstone Jack:

OR,
THE TRAPPERS OF THE ENCHANTED GROUND.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "OLD BULL'S EYE, THE LIGHTNING SHOT OF THE PLAINS."

CHAPTER XX.

VICTORY IN DEFEAT.

YELLOWSTONE JACK and Brindle Joe brought into play their utmost skill, and managed to convey Minnie and Kittie safely to the emigrant camp, without coming into collision with any of the skulking enemy. And yet the young trapper had found time to solve the mystery that still hung around the Boiling Spring. A few adroit questions to Kittie brought it about. There was no further need of concealment, since 'twas very unlikely that she would ever revisit the retreat.

By means of a piece of prepared hide, the weird woman had hidden an opening in the side of the spring toward the mound. Firmly pinned to the ground, a foot below the surface of the spring, and weighted at the lower edge, the skin curtain hung almost motionless, or if it did sway a trifle now and then, it seemed but the reflection of the effervescent water. By diving into the spring—which was "boiling" from heat, since this spring had long been (and is still) noted for its magic powers, both as a tonic and a means of "making medicine," and men came scores of miles simply to quaff its waters—and pressing against the skin, the running water would quickly carry one into the mound. This also had been a spring in ages gone by, and gradually subsiding, by some strange freak had left this refuge—like some gigantic glue-pot, seething in its hot water receptacle.

A trap-door had been cunningly cut through the wall. A light horse-hair lasso had also aided Kittie and her adopted mother.

The reader must imagine the joyous meeting between father and daughter, for my pen is not nimble enough to do the matter justice. The greatest drawback was that both Ada and Frank were lying quite ill. The first transports over, Minnie quietly took her station as nurse, nor did she once abandon her post through all the excitements and horrors of the coming night.

It would have been impossible to move the wounded youth, even had the emigrants believed it prudent to resume their journey while so few of the enemy still hovered around them. So they contented themselves with strengthening their defenses and seeing that their weapons were in readiness for use.

Vernon Campbell, who seemed to consider himself as one of the party for good or ill, warned them that they might expect an attack that night, since the reinforcements could be brought up by that time, as the nearest Blackfoot village was not more than fifty miles distant.

And thus in watching and waiting the day slowly wore away. The emigrants were calm and composed, though the chances were greatly against them. Yet they were men, and could die, if die they must, like true pioneers.

The sun set, giving promise of a clear, cloudless night, nor was the pledge belied. The moon arose, bright and beaming; the lithe plain before the corral was rendered distinctly visible. The emigrants' position was such that they could be attacked only from in front, and to do this the enemy must fully expose their bodies to the deadly aim of the pale-faces.

There were those in the corral who secretly hoped and believed that the savages would not venture an attack under these adverse circumstances, but both Campbell and Yellowstone Jack argued different. The Blackfeet had suffered a heavy loss, and would be wild to wipe out the stain.

"They'll wipe us out this time, or bust," said Brindle Joe.

"Maybe they'll bust, then," chuckled Yellowstone Jack. "Wouldn't it be a snipitous sight—them all bustin'?"

The hours rolled rapidly by. Midnight came and passed by, without sign or sound of the enemy. Yet the emigrants held their posts, watchful and vigilant. No danger of their growing careless while these men like Campbell and the trappers were on the alert.

Then, all at once, there came the rapid thud of many hoofs upon the hard ground, and a dark mass burst out from the pass, and scattering, dashed furiously down upon the corral wagons. The wild yell of the Blackfeet broke the air. The critical moment had arrived. The enemy was upon them.

No man's pen could describe what followed. An active mind might grasp the idea—a vivid imagination realize some of the scenes—but words are powerless to picture the wild, terrific, sublime and horrible whole.

The headlong charge of the Blackfeet and outlaws was met by a deliberate, closely-aimed volley from the emigrants' rifles that covered the ground with dead and disabled horses and riders. Yet the rush was not even momentarily checked. The survivors, yelling and screaming like veritable demons, dashed on as though they meant to override the substantial wagons. Hurling their animals against the wagons, the foremost riders leaped from the saddle, endeavoring to scale the barricade.

They were met by pistol shots, blows from clubbed rifles and knife-thrusts. Still a few gained an entrance, and recklessly attacking the emigrants, forced them to turn from the

barricade, in order to defend their lives. And taking advantage of this, the Blackfeet, with every moment, dropped into the inclosure.

Vernon Campbell, raged like a lion, and wherever his tall, lithe form passed, there death reigned triumphant. His wild war-cry rung out at intervals, and even in their madness the Blackfeet would shrink back from the terrible, dreaded Blood-drinker.

Yellowstone Jack and Brindle Joe fought side by side, carving their mark in bloody, indelible characters upon the bodies of their foes.

And yet there was one who surpassed them all in acts of daring, strength and bloodiness.

This was the giant, Jethro Cowles. His madness seemed to have returned with the sounds of battle, and he plunged into the melee with a frantic delight that found vent in hoarse, roaring shouts. His weapon was an iron crowbar that he had picked up from where it had been used to roll over stones to strengthen the barricade. This he wielded with as much ease as though it had been a reed. He never had need to repeat a blow.

Wherever the iron descended, death followed. Heads were shattered like gourds, limbs were crushed to atoms, and bodies mangled almost beyond recognition. Two arrows already quivered feather deep in his broad chest. Blood streamed from a dozen other wounds. Yet no savage arm seemed strong enough to touch his life.

And thus the furious death-grapple raged for full half an hour. But bravely, desperately as the emigrants fought, they were terribly outnumbered. Already their ranks were fearfully thinned, while two savages seemed to spring forward, to take the place of every dead brave. The end was near. They must soon yield to the overpowering force that hemmed them in upon every side.

But hark! that sound—what means it?

"Hooray for Hoosier!" yelled Yellowstone Jack, in wild delight. "Sack it to 'em, boys—h-yar comes the Brigade!"

And, far above the thunder of hoofs, above the din of the death-grapple, there came the clear, ringing cheer that only white throats can utter, as the Trapping Brigade under gallant Jim Bridger rushed to the rescue.

From a fight, the affair changed to a massacre. That night was black one in the annals of the Indians. The trappers paid off many an old score. To use their own phrase, "har jest more'n went woffin'!"

It was full daylight before the party of trappers all returned from their pursuit of the Indians. And not a single among them all but bore at least one bloody trophy.

Yet, alas! all was not joy. Over a dozen white bodies were placed in a ghastly row, awaiting burial.

CHAPTER XXI.

GATHERING THE THREADS.

JETHRO COWLES had fallen; the rest of the dead were emigrants. They were buried close to the spot where they fell, in the shadow of the great rock.

Yellowstone Jack had dispatched Hoosier to see if he could find and induce the Brigade to come to the assistance of the emigrants. Lest he should fail in finding them in time, Jack did not think it proper to excite hopes that might never be realized, and so had told no person of what he had done.

The trappers, under Jim Bridger, agreed to see the train safe back to the regular trail; as their trapping season was nearly ended anyhow. And by early dawn of the next day they were en route, Ada and Maynard being conveyed in easy litters.

Kittie, between whom and Minnie there had sprung up an ardent friendship, decided to catch her lot with the maiden whom she had rescued from the insane fury of the weird woman.

That evening, when they encamped, Campbell was told of the words spoken by the weird woman, and after some time, by questioning Kittie concerning the past, he became convinced that she was indeed his long-lost sister, whom he had thought dead—massacred with his mother and father. It was an affecting scene.

John Warren, who had so much cause for feeling grateful toward the young man, despite the fact that he had first been allied with the enemy, made Campbell a generous offer if he would continue with them, at least as far as their distant destination. And, if only for his new-found sister's sake, the young scout resolved to bid adieu to his terrible life, feeling that he had long since kept his vow of vengeance.

In due course of time the Brigade departed, but not until the emigrants had fallen in with another train; with their combined forces, there was no danger to be apprehended from the Indians that might yet beset the route.

Does the reader think it strange that Yellowstone Jack joined the train as hunter? Of course Brindle Joe cast his lot with his "old pard." And of all those who were pleased with Campbell's decision, assuredly Kittie Campbell was not the least. Though there had been no word of love spoken between them, the time could not be very far distant when it would be. And though Vernon Campbell shrewdly suspected the truth, he did not choose to interfere. Perhaps he knew how to sympathize with Jack. At least so Minnie mischievously whispered to the blushing Ada.

Both Ada and Frank soon regained their wonted health. And the terrible past, by mutual consent, never alluded to. None there but were glad to forget it.

It was not until he reached California that John Warren fully understood Mat Moie's object. Then he learned all.

His brother was dead—had been brutally murdered. Suspicion had fallen upon his overseer; whose description exactly coincided with that of Gerald Manners—or the man of many names. It seems that Warren had been quite ill, and, fearing death, had made his will in favor of Minnie, his niece, who had ever been his favorite, because she was the youthful image of her mother, whom both brothers had loved, though John won her heart and hand. He wrote a letter to John, and hired Mole to convey it safely, in case of his death. But he recovered. Then Mole murdered him, took what ready money he had, and fled. On the road he forged a letter, requesting John Warren to come to California. This he delivered, as Gerald Manners, and paid assiduous court to the unknown heiress, but in vain. Frank Maynard already possessed her heart. Then he connected the diabolical plot which he afterward attempted to carry out, ending in his disfigurement and horrible death.

John Warren proved his relationship and came into the murdered man's property.

Six months later there was a triple wedding on the cattle-farm. Need I give the names?

Maynard and Campbell have been taken into partnership by Warren, while Yellowstone Jack is their trusted overseer and "head man."

Brindle Joe still leads a single life, but sticks closely to his old pard. Wild horses couldn't

pull him away. He is the self-constituted "head nurse" of the establishment—and has his hands full, too. Brigham Young can scarce boast a larger family of "olive branches."

THE END.

DESERVING BOYS.

WE like boys who try to help themselves. Every one ought to be friendly to them. The boys of energy and ambition, who make a manly effort to do something for themselves, are the hope of the country. Let their anxious ears catch always words of encouragement and cheer, for such words, like favoring breezes to the sails of a ship, help to bear them forward to the destination they seek.

It is not always as it should be in this respect. Many a heart has been broken—many a young man of industry, and animated by honorable motives, has been discouraged by the sour words, the harsh and unjust remarks of some unfeeling employer, or some relative who should have acted the part of a friend.

The unthinking do not consider the weight with which such remarks sometimes fall upon a sensitive spirit, and how they may bruise and break it.

If you cannot do anything to aid and assist young men, you ought to abstain from throwing any obstacles in their way. But can you not do something to help them forward? You can at least say "God speed" to them, and you can say it feelingly from your heart. You little know of how much benefit to boys and young men encouraging counsel, given fitly and well-timed, may be; and in the great day of account, such words addressed to those in need of them, you may find reckoned among your good deeds.

Then help the boys who try to help themselves. You can easily recall simple words of kindness addressed to yourself in your childhood and youth, and you would like now to see the lips that spoke them though they may long since have been sealed with the silence of death, and covered by the clouds of the valley.

CONSUMPTION.

the scourge of the human family, may in its early stages be promptly arrested and permanently cured.

RAVENSWOOD, W. VA.

Dr. R. V. PIERCE, Buffalo, N. Y.

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KATE T. WARNER.

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S. R. ELEAN, druggist, of West Union, O., writes to state that Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery has effected a wonderful cure of Consumption in his neighborhood.

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TOTAL DEPRIVITY.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

My heart is filled with sor-i-ow,
My head is filled with noise,
To see the great rambunctiousness
Of sinful urchin boys.

Two boys were playing mar-bi-els
As I came round the hill,
And one was appalled Dick,
And one cognomened Bill.

Now, in that wicked game of "keeps,"
As sadly I looked on,
Bill said that Richard hunched, and Dick
Called Bill another one.

And William quicker than two winks
Got up from off his knees,
Bestowing upon Richard's nose
A blow that made him sneeze.

Then Dick articulated "Gosh!"
And pitched in with a vim,
To demonstrate that bad old rule,
To do as done by him.

My eyes were full of bitter tears,
Such fighting for to see,
And I sat down to watch the fuss
Progressing rather free.

Each grabbed the other tight, and both
Proceeded for to drop,
And rolled around so fast, it seemed
That both were on the top.

They bit and gouged, and pounded much;
Each other's clothes they tore;
The gravel flew for forty rods,
And then both of them swore.

I sighed and rose upon my feet,
"So much depravity
As those in all my circuit round,"
I said, "I never see."

"If this here fight must be kept up,
I pray that you'll restrict
Yourselves to business; so don't swear;
I want to see both licked."

"To mix profanity with fight
Is an awful thing indeed;
Don't let me have to stop this fuss—
Children of sin, proceed!"

They stopped the fight, and said, "Go to,
You venerable fella!"
And both pitched into me with rocks,
And drove me quite a mile.

My heart is filled with sor-i-ow,
My head is filled with noise,
To see so much rambunctiousness
In sinful urchin boys.

LEAVES

From an Actor's Life;

OR,
Recollections of Plays and Players.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

IX.—More about *Old Drury*—*Creswick, Murdock, and Cunningham*—*Guy Mannering*—*The Woods, Vocalists*—*Charlotte Cushman*—*Nicholas Nickleby*—*Mrs. Field as Smike*—*Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean in Ion*—*Their Merits Contrasted*—*Edmund Kean*—*A Theatrical Riot*.

THOUGH I was frequently behind the scenes of the Old Boston Theater (the New Boston Theater is in an entirely different location, and would have been considered out of town in the time of the old Federal street Theater, as it was generally called,) I was more often in the front of the house, among the audience, and I witnessed some grand performances there.

The remembrance of them is vivid in my memory now. Every actor of note, who visited America, trod the boards of this time-honored stage. Many young actors commenced their careers there who have since become famous.

There was *Creswick*, an Englishman, who became very popular, returned to his own country, and took a high position, which he holds to this day. There was our own James E. Murdock, since so distinguished as a reader and elocutionist. The *Charlotte Cushman* gave her graphic delineation of *Meg Merrilies* in "Guy Mannering," founded upon Sir Walter Scott's novel of that name; and an excellent singer, a Mrs. Wood—an English lady—appeared at the same time as "Lucy Bertram," and sung the music incidental to the play with great sweetness. Her husband also appeared in the play as "Henry Bertram." He was a fine vocalist. Peter Cunningham, if I remember aright, was the "Dominie Sampson." He was a great delineator of what are called dialect characters, Scotch, Irish or Welsh. His *Baillie Nicol Jarvie*, in the play of "Rob Roy" (another dramatization from Sir Walter Scott) was considered his great character, but he was very good in others.

I remember one character particularly in which he made a very strong impression at this time. *Charles Dickens*' works had become popular, and a play was made out of *Nicholas Nickleby*, in which *Cunningham* appeared as *Newman Noggs*, the seedy individual with the benevolent turn of mind, who asserts, confidentially:

"I was a gentleman once, sir—I was indeed!"

The play, I think, was presented at the Tremont Theater. My memory may be at fault at times as to which theater was the locality of different events which are photographed, so to speak, upon my brain. In my capacity as child-actor, I went through every theater in Boston, from the Old Lion Theater to the Eagle in the North End, and as there was so many of them, one closing and another opening, it is but natural that I should get them mixed at that early period of my stage career.

In this same play of "Nicholas Nickleby," Mrs. Field played *Smike*, and if I am not mistaken, was the mother of *Kate Field*, the actress, who so recently made her debut as an actress. Mrs. Field was an excellent actress, and if *Kate* inherits her talent a successful career is before her.

To return to the "Old Drury." Here for the first time I saw Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean. She impressed me very favorably, but he did not. His acting was marred by mannerisms, and he sputtered in his speech in a way that made his voice sound oddly to the ear. You liked him better, however, when you grew accustomed to his peculiarities. He was evidently a gentleman and a scholar, and had been a close and patient student of his art; but the genius of his father, Edmund Kean, had not descended to him.

I have thought that he owed much of his success in his theatrical life to his wife, who had earned a proud reputation as *Miss Ellen Tree*, before he married her. She possessed every requisite for a great actress. She had a handsome face, with very expressive features, a graceful and well-proportioned figure, and a voice of much strength and sweetness, and knew how to modulate it with singular skill.

Thus, she was always the chief attraction, and her excellencies made amends for his deficiencies.

The play in which I first saw them, was *Sergeant Noon Talford*'s classic tragedy of *Ion*. I have now before me an exquisite portrait of Mrs. Charles Kean, in the character of *Ion*. If I could only present it here, it

would give a better idea of her appearance than any words that I can write.

Mr. Kean personated *Adrastus*, the King of *Argos*, and was regally costumed; but his slight figure, I thought, did not convey the idea of one of those ancient warrior kings. Whereas, Mrs. Kean looked to perfection the devoted youth who gave his life to free his country from the pestilence.

I have thought that *Charles Kean* owed much to the great reputation which his father acquired. There is no brighter name in the annals of the drama than that of Edmund Kean. He was a theatrical comet, blazing through his orbit with never-fading splendor. His great success made him arrogant, at times, and negligent of the duty he owed the public.

On this very stage he had received a lesson, which, I think, he never forgot, or forgave Boston for administering.

He visited America, as many great actors have done, and appeared in Boston in what he considered one of his best characters. The audience which assembled to witness his performance, did not meet his expectations in point of numbers. He did not think that his ability was appreciated, (there have been many actors with considerably less talent than Edmund Kean, who have thought the same) and he refused to play the second night although he was duly advertised.

He left Boston in disgust, with a determination never to revisit that puritanical city; but, some three years afterward, he reconsidered his determination, and accepted an engagement in Boston. The citizens, however, had not forgotten the slight he had put upon them.

The audience on the night of his reappearance must have met his most sanguine expectations, for the theater was literally packed with men; this was an ominous circumstance. There was but one woman in that dense throng, and she had come, despite the well known fact that there was going to be a "row."

The audience, however, behaved with the greatest decorum until Edmund Kean made his appearance, and then hoots, hisses and groans arose in a wild roar that made the very walls tremble.

Kean struggled manfully to make himself heard, but it was useless. Various missiles were thrown at him, and it soon became evident that personal violence was intended. He rushed from the stage in anger and dismay, and the manager hurried him as speedily as possible from the theater, and then announced to the mob, who had scaled the stage from the pit, that Mr. Kean had left the theater.

The excited throng vented their displeasure on the scenery and fixtures of the theater, and, after a scene of the wildest confusion, they finally retired.

This is the only theatrical riot that I have any recollection of in Boston. It happened, I need scarcely say, before my time, but my father witnessed it, to the great damage of his overcoat in making his escape from the theater. I often heard him speak of the affair.

But the memory of this transaction was very faint when *Charles Kean* made his appearance in Boston, and his father's sins were not visited upon him.

His career was a successful and an honorable one, and I think his visits to this country were always pleasant and lucrative.

A Summer's Episode.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THE slanting May sunshine was shining through the newly-budding branches of the grand old trees in front of Farmer Weston's kitchen-door; and motherly Mrs. Weston, her afternoon work "done up," and her comfortable figure invested in a clean gingham apron, was sitting cozily in the big, capacious rocking-chair, just where the bright patch of sunshine gilded the sweet, sanded floor.

It was a charming place, the Weston farm, and homestead, that had been in the family for generations. Broad stretching acres of pasture land; wide belts of timber; big orchards; extensive vegetable gardens; and right in the middle of it all, like a king on his throne, was the big, cool, cosy farmhouse.

It was a happy home; and the Westons a happy family. Contentment, industry and full and plenty were always theirs; and, except on rare occasions, when the housemother would have a turn of homesickness to see her one child—her boy Lee, off at a boys' seminary—all was delightfully serene.

To-day—this queenly May day, with roots swelling and grasses springing, sap flowing, and buds bursting, Mrs. Weston had received a letter—the news in which was fated to be of greatest importance to her; but which, even in her half-frowning amazement, she was not conscious of.

On her big lap—just such a lap as grandchildren ought to have nestled in, and clambered over, lay the open letter; on her calm, placid forehead, ordinarily calm, but just this oment, the least bit expressive of puzzled indecision—on her forehead lay her steel-rimmed glasses; and her thoughtful eyes were roaming far ahead, as if in search for an answer to the question in the letter, amid the warm sun's rays.

Ten minutes later, a cherry-faced, genial man, in vest and shirt sleeves, came up from the meadow land, and sat down on the wooden stoop outside the door.

Well, mother, this is pretty warm for May, isn't it?

Fretty warm, father. And see here—a letter from your sister Susan, with a request that you take her little girl for the summer, while she joins a party to Europe. Motherly, isn't she?

"Susan's little girl, eh? She wasn't bigger'n a pint o' cider when I saw her last. What's her name, now?"

Mrs. Weston put on her glasses again and went slowly over the letter.

"Lillias"—Lillias Liff. 'She will be no care or anxiety,' Susan says. But I want to know what the child will do with herself all alone. She'll be dreadful lonesome, I'm thinking."

Mr. Weston wiped the sweat off his forehead with a big bandanna.

"No she won't. Youngsters can find a thousand ways to amuse themselves. Give her some bright pieces of calico, and I'll buy her a doll, and Dave'll make her a wagon—she'll get along. I'll quite like a little youngster trottin' around. I do like children, you know, mother," he added, half apologetically.

"I know you do—so do I; only I was afraid she'd be miserable and lonesome, and I was thinking it is a good thing, Lee will be home soon—he's a master hand with children, and he can teach Lillias to hunt eggs and climb fences."

Then after the quiet, simple supper was over, and the hired men and the kitchen girl had

been in to prayers, Farmer Weston sat down and wrote to Susan to send the child along and welcome.

The blossoms had come—a white and pink glory, perfuming the soft air with their dainty, subtle sweetness, and then, their fragile reign of beauty over, they had floated in silent showers to the mother earth. The tender leaflets were growing gladly, and it seemed to mother Weston, as she stood in the open doorway, her hand shading her eyes, and her plump form attired in her best black silk, in honor of the day, that surely all Nature was rejoicing that her boy was coming home—her Lee, manly, roguish darling that he was.

Happy tears were in her eyes as she remembered the day, two years ago, when he had gone away, his satchel crammed with doughnuts, and his cap swinging in boyish exuberance as the stage carried him away. To-day—he came by the railroad, and father had gone to meet him; and she stood there, in speechless bliss, waiting for the first glimpse of the boyish figure, and boyish face.

Then—somebody came in at the other door; a quick footstep behind her, and a pair of strong arms caught her, and—yes—yes—actually, positively, something like a monster kissed her!

"Mother, aren't you glad I'm home again?" "It's never Lee—never! Why, where's my boy?"

And yet her dear old face was full of proud delight, mingled with a strange, wistful surprise.

Farmer Weston laughed in irrepressible joy.

"Sure enough, mother! Where is our Lee? Why, under this mustache, of course. Don't you suppose a fellow's going to grow up and change considerable in a couple o' years? Why, he's twenty, ain't he?"

He was a fine, manly young fellow, so different from the roguish lad that had left them. Two years of hard study and commingling with influences outside the country-side, had made him grave, thoughtful, refined—the development of the germs of character that were always in him.

So he came home—handsome Lee, with his five feet six, his becoming city clothes, his irresistible mustache, his stylish college air.

At supper that night, mother Weston suddenly laid down her fork, and began to laugh. "It seems so ridiculous," she said, "to think I intended our Lee to play with Lillias Liff when she comes! Why, the child will be terrified by such a strapping fellow."

Lee swallowed a portion of cream pie, then manifested his interest in the subject.

"Who is Lillias Liff?"

"Your little cousin—your aunt Susan's girl. She's coming here to stay with us this summer—and I calculated on your amusing her, Lee."

Lee smiled magnanimously.

"Well, I will. There's some candy in my trunk I bought for you, mother, and the same old picture books I took away. Children always like candy and pictures, don't they?"

"I think we'll manage to entertain her. Poor little soul! to think her mother can be off pleasing and leave her behind! I've got Dave to make a wagon for her to draw her doll, and there's a bag full of bright patches for her to sew. I half persuaded my father to have the little crib set up in our room—she'll cry at night, likely, but he seemed to think the little room off it would be as well. You must take the phaeton over to meet her on Tuesday, Lee, and be sure to be very kind to her."

A gentle western wind was blowing after a heavy thunder-shower, and every blade of grass sparkled as if hung with diamonds. The sun shone goldenly in the western sky, while in the east, were high piled huge banks of black clouds, from which the passing shower still fell and reverberated its distant peals. It was a weird, grand scene, and Lee Weston enjoyed it immensely as he drove leisurely over to the village depot, where he arrived just in time to see the passengers for Greenville alight on the station platform.

As usual, there were but few travelers for the quiet little nestling village; and Lee, standing where he commanded a view of every car door, was not long counting the people the train disgorged before it went puffing on again.

A very stylish looking young gentleman, with green glasses, and an aristocratic traveling satchel; an elderly man, who asked no questions of anybody, but made straight for the one hotel on Main street, as though he knew the way; a young lady, dressed in light gray silk, with the prettiest blue eyes Lee had ever seen, and an elegant, stifled air about her, and from whom Lee turned his admiring regards just the least reluctantly to wonder if the elderly, shabby woman bustling toward him, holding by the hand a bashful, gawky girl of thirteen, was the one to whom he must pay his dutiful devoirs.

It must be confessed, a little feeling of disgust trembled over the young fellow, at a second survey of the frowsy girl he was expected to help entertain all that long, dreary summer.

The woman, still grasping the girl's hand, as though she labored under the alarmingly ridiculous idea that people generally had de signs on the life of her charge, came familiarly up to Lee.

"Be you any of the Weston folks?"

"I am Lee Weston, madam. The carriage is waiting; we expected you."

"You didn't! I don't see how that can be, when I hadn't made up my mind myself till this morning."

Lee didn't listen particularly—he had stolen another glance at the fair girl who was gathering up her silken skirt preparatory to departing. Such a ravishing little high-heeled foot the depraved fellow on thought.

"We may as well be going. I presume this is my cousin, is it? Miss Lillias Liff? I hope you will like the country, Miss Lillias. We live only a mile over yonder, see! A straight, delightful walk, but I'll drive you over."

The girl stared, and hung back, blushing a purple red; the woman gave her a jerk that brought her up all standing.

"Where's your manners! though I don't wonder you're mixed at Mr. Lee's gammon. We don't want no carriage. We're used to walkin', and Miss Weston'll be glad to see us afoot. A clever woman never *did* live."

A thrill of relief shot over Lee that the woman refused to ride, somehow—had he, he wouldn't stay reproved; he hated to have that bright-eyed, roguish-faced girl see him on familiar terms with such common looking folks, if one of them was his cousin, with a name altogether too sweet for her. He was mortified, because he might meet this girl again at some of the neighbors'; he actually made up his mind to inquire of the Leveretts and the Millers who she was. As he drove off

in his dainty little phaeton, he cast a parting glance at the girl, still standing carelessly at the end of the platform, with her skirts in her hand, and her gray, pink-lined parasol over her face. She was giving directions to the station-master, who served triple capacity as such, ticket agent and general informant, regarding two immense trunks on the platform. Her voice did not reach him, but one laughingly provoking glance of her eyes did, and Lee thought as he drove briskly off, that she appreciated his uncomfortable position; also, he decided, there was a chance of seeing her again. The baggage-master knew where the trunks went. He drove on, under the flaming sunset sky, five miles to the nearest town, to execute a long neglected commission, catching a glimpse as he turned the curve, of the fair, gray-robed girl stepping off the platform; and, down the road, of the woman and girl, who really had a good walk when free from embarrassment.

The summer sky was all softly alight with stars, and the cool air made the night deliciously refreshing. A light gleamed from the kitchen window of the Weston farm-house, as Lee came in, after his long ride, he thought how homelike it all was—his fat, comfortable mother, rocking in her chair and talking to the woman he had seen at the depot; the table arranged for one, with strawberries and cream, sponge-cake, and salmon, bread and butter and cottage cream.

His mother met him with an eager welcome.

"Lillias has come!"

"I know it, and he bowed to the woman.

"Tired out, too, I suppose. Gone to bed?" He sat down to the tempting little meal, feeling just a little provoked at his mother's answer.

"Oh, no, she hasn't gone to bed. She's out on the side piazza. She's delighted with the roses."

Lee wondered where the fine taste for flowers came from, to be developed under that towzled hair, but he said nothing; only, when his mother went to the door, and called— "Come in, dear, and see my boy!" he felt like assuring her there was no such hurry.

He heard hasty footsteps, and with a mouth full of bread and butter, turned to make his devoirs to his mother's guest.

Shades of Confucius! A tall, dainty girl—in gray silk—with mischievous blue eyes—with suggestively sweet, saucy lips that were dimpling with a series of mirthful smiles—the girl he had seen at the depot!

"Cousin Lee?"

"Miss—madam—I—this is Lillias?"

She laughed heartily.

"Of a truth, I am Lillias. I am so impatient for the dolls and the wagons and the patchwork, and the little boy whom I was led to believe would torment the life out of me."

Lee had recovered himself admirably.

"I am he, waiting to be promoted to that office. But I thought you were a little girl, in short dresses and straw hats."

And all this while, Mrs. Weston sat and laughed till her plump figure quivered like jelly; and even the innocent cause of the error—the gaunt woman in the corner, who came every year with her child, to help gather peas—a fact of which Lee knew nothing—smiled at the young folks.

Yes, this was Lillias—this fair, dainty girl, who took them all by such sweet surprise; and Lee, in his cousin's eyes, was a young demigod.

Is there any more to say? Need there be aught told of that blissful summer, when Lillias and Lee took such excellent care of each other? Or of the after time—the three years that Lillias wore Lee's ring, while the proud young lover prepared himself for the honored position of her husband?

It was a tender, charming episode—one of hundreds that might be chronicled of that same summer-time.

How He Won a Wife.

BY A. GOULD PENN, ESQ.

My occupation as a "drummer," for the great wholesale notion house of Trunk & Co., of St. Louis, often took me far out among the small frontier villages, and it was at the little county town of Centreville I made the acquaintance of Doctor Brooks. It was my usual custom to spend a day or two with the hospitable doctor and his amiable wife; indeed, to have neglected this, would have subjected me to their great displeasure.

It was a tender, charming episode—one of hundreds that might be chronicled of that same summer-time.

Sitting in front of his blazing hearth, one evening in early winter, enjoying our social pipes, he told me many of his early experiences on the frontier. Modest as well as brave, it took my most adroit questioning to get from him the facts of the following story, which I give in his own language:

"You see, Charlie, this country was a great deal wilder when I first came, than what it is now. Centreville was then a mere trading post, and the wild Pawnees often made their raids in this neighborhood; and many of the half civilized savages infested the country, carrying on a system of cruelty and plunder in organized bands like banditti."

"When I left college I made my way to St. Joe, and not finding a point to suit me, I determined to push on further west, and being a little fond of adventure, anyhow, I bought me a mule and suitable traps and struck out."

"I arrived at Centreville about dusk, one evening, tired and hungry, and made my way to that old log tavern you have seen up street there. A man by the name of Joe Crooks kept it then, and it was a general rendezvous for hunters, trappers, settlers and drunken Pawnees. Well, I had my mule put up and got some supper, and then went into the bar-room, where were a lot of rough-looking fellows, and a drunken Indian. I hadn't been in there but a few moments, when I saw that there was a disposition manifested by a few of the roughs to impose on Big Snake, as the Indian was named, while some, more peaceably disposed, were trying to prevent their abusing him. But a few drams more of the landlord's vile whiskey made the ruffians uncontrollable, and one of them struck Big Snake with his brawny fist, stretching him helpless on the floor, then, with a drunken fury, he drew a long knife and was about to follow up his evil design and murder the now sobered savage, who was striving to regain his feet."

"This made me mad; I never could bear to see any one imposed upon, so, without thinking of the consequences, I whipped out my navy, and sprung before the infuriated wretch."

"Halt!" says I, "stranger; this thing has gone far enough." And the ruffian stopped short, and gazed at me like a tiger at bay.

"Looker here, stranger, I don't want any

of your gab in this matter; you jist git now, or take the consequences."

"With my revolver covering the ruffian, all my coolness and self-possession came to my aid, and I resolved to see the matter through, now that it had begun."

"You shall not impose on that poor Indian further," I said; "this thing has gone far enough; I can't see anybody made the sport of a bully. Put up and shut up, or take the consequences yourself. One step toward me and you are a dead man!"

"I could see his eyes glaring like a wildcat's upon me from beneath his grizzly eyebrows, but, at this juncture, his friends pressed around him, and at length prevailed upon him to drop the matter, to which he finally agreed. So, I put away my shooter, and called for a treat for the crowd, and soon I was hale fellow with them all, though I could still see that Bill Dawson, as the ruffian was called, despite his effort to keep the truce, eyed me with an occasional glance that boded me no good."

"Meanwhile, Big Snake had stood at my back, with his arms folded in savage dignity, and when the trouble was finally ended he started from the room, and I saw him no more that evening."

"It was near midnight when the crowd dispersed; the unusual excitement had made me forget how tired and sleepy I was, but it began to tell on me, so I signified my desire to go to bed, whereupon the landlord stepped to the door and called—'Jennie, ho, Jennie!'"

"A light pattering step, and a girlish voice in response answered his summons."

"Here, Jennie, show this gentleman your room."

"To say I was astonished at the appearance of this girl Jennie, will but faintly convey my idea. A lovely young woman she seemed to me, and one too lovely and good to be found in such a wild, godless place. But I followed her to a room in the second story, and as she left me at the door, with her fingers on her lips to enjoin silence, she whispered to me: 'Stranger, look out when you resume your journey.' Bill Dawson is a lawless man and may do you harm."

"Then she was gone, and I retired to the little bed set apart for me, my brain in a perfect whirl with the events of the day, and Jennie's sweet face and her words of caution, until at last I sunk into a profound slumber. It seemed to me I had scarcely been asleep ten minutes, when a loud knock on my door and the landlord's call to breakfast aroused me. Having partaken heartily of the rough fare set before me, I paid my reckoning, and mounted my mule, determined to make Fort H—that day, it being about fifty miles distant. My plan was to go out as far as Fort H—, and spend a little time there, and either take the overland route across the prairie, or return again to Centreville."

"In fact, I was feeling entirely indifferent in regard to my future actions; I could think of nothing but Jennie's sweet face, and I kissed my hand to her as I rode off, to which she responded with a smile and a look as if of caution, that haunted me continually. I had ridden about five miles out toward the hills, and was winding up the rugged path that led to their summit, when a sudden shot from some low trees and bushes caused my animal to start and I nearly lost my balance. This was immediately followed by another shot, apparently from a revolver, and hastily dismounting I drew my weapon and prepared to open fire on my unseen foe. I had not long to wait; the dark form of the outlaw Dawson appeared above the bushes, with a rifle leveled at my head, and he slowly advanced from his covert, keeping me covered, and ordered me not to raise my pistol on pain of instant death. I dared not move. I saw murder in the villain's eye, and as he slowly approached I gave myself up for lost, but resolved to die game."

"Ha, my hantam!" said the villain, "whose turn is it now?"

"The words had scarcely passed his lips when a rifle cracked from the trees behind him; the arm that held his gun dropped and he staggered and turned. This was my chance, and quick as a flash I sent a bullet through his head. He fell without a groan, and at the same instant a savage form, which I at once recognized as that of Big Snake, sprang into the path."

"White brother, how do? was his greeting, and he approached and offered to shake hands. I shook hands with him, and in his broken English he informed me that he believed Dawson meant to murder me, and as I had saved his life at the tavern, he had resolved to keep watch and render me any assistance I might need. I was surprised, indeed, at such a display of gratitude from a drunken Indian, but none the less thankful that he had saved my life. To my horror and surprise, Big Snake coolly proceeded to scalp the dead ruffian, and waving the bloody trophy at me he disappeared in the forest."

"I at once decided to return to Centreville, so, taking the rifle, pistols and knife of the outlaw, I mounted my mule and turned his head for town. On my arrival at Crooks', I was greeted with exclamations of surprise by the landlord and a crowd of loafers that had gathered in his bar-room. I told my story, and all were rejoiced that the ruffian Dawson had met his death. A small party of settlers went out to the hills and returned with the body, which was hastily buried the same day."

"I staid in the village, and, as the county became rapidly populous, I soon found myself with all the practice I could attend to. Now, Charlie, I must tell you how Jennie had done me a great service, but you must know that by Jennie; I mean my wife, here, for she was the greatest inducement to my remaining in this place."

"Well, she didn't tell me of it, for some time after we were married; but on the night I had my quarrel with Dawson, she had been a listener and key-hole spectator to that occurrence, and as she knew the ruffian might do me harm, she quietly slipped out to the barn where Dawson had left his rifle and pistols, and extracted all the bullets; that's the reason he did not drop me at the first shot, for he was known as a capital marksman, and it must have surprised him when his second